

THE LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

THE RIGHT OF TRANSLATION]

[SEPTEMBER 1, 1873.]

No. 538.—VOL. XXI.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING AUGUST 23, 1873.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[CORA'S ANSWER.]

SHIFTING SANDS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Elgiva; or, the Gipsy's Curse," "The Snapt Link," "The Lost Coronet," etc., etc.

CHAPTER I.

But under the disguise of love
Thou say'st thou only can'st to prove
What my affections were.
Think'st thou that love is helped by fear?
Go, get thee quickly forth;
I ne'er will owe my health to a disease.

"THE London boat does not sail till midnight, I think?" asked an English gentleman of some eight-and-thirty years of age, for to judge from his general appearance such was his years, and as his accent proved such was undoubtedly his nationality.

"Yes, sir—that is if you are going to the Thames," answered the elderly waiter of the Hotel de Paris—one of the most comfortable of Boulogne inns—of whom the question was asked. "The Folkestone steamer sails an hour earlier."

But the gentleman scorned alike the temptation of the earlier departure and shorter passage, and only replied with an assenting nod.

"Very well, I shall return in time for some supper before I start. The luggage is ready to be sent on board at any moment."

The waiter bowed with all his native civility, which was perhaps slightly polished into even smoother courtesy by the fact that the gentleman in question had his luggage labelled "The Honourable Sibbald Carew," a "handle" to the name which his appearance fully justified.

He had one of those happily made figures which neither amplify into corpulence nor shrink into angular thinness as they approach middle age. Tall, lithe, and free in every movement, and with finely cut Roman features, and dark, richly clustering brown hair, he bore "aristocrat" stamped on form and face as plainly as the brass plates and baggage labels on their engraved surfaces.

As he carelessly lounged from the hotel doors and took his way along the shore, past the "Etablissement

ment des Bains," the free, firm step had no little indication of military training, though he bore no such rank on the address to which allusion has been made.

He went leisurely on, evidently bent on a complete survey of the environs of Boulogne, or else for a constitutional walk to prepare himself for his passage. Or perhaps it was but to while away time or dispel the thought which somewhat clouded his fine countenance and abstracted his attention from exterior objects as he walked on, with his eyes fixed upon and yet not taking into his brain the peculiarities of the scenery around. For Sibbald Carew had some shadows on what seemed a fair and prosperous life, and his nature was too imperious for patient endurance of his trials.

He had walked perhaps some three miles out of the town, mounting the hills and inhaling the fresh sea air, which came full and soft on the heights, when some clouds that had been long stealthily gaining ground on the sky suddenly closed in with alarming rapidity, and in a few moments large drops of rain betokened a heavy if passing storm to be breaking in unpleasant violence on the defenceless head of the stranger pedestrian.

He looked hastily round for refuge from its fury. The only dwelling within sight was a small cabin-looking cottage, about fifty yards from the path he was pursuing, and Mr. Carew rapidly sprang forward till he gained its closed entrance.

A sharp knock at the door, however, soon brought the inmates to his aid, and a girl of some fifteen or so years old appeared as the portress of the little tenement.

"May I come in, mademoiselle? Will you give me shelter?" he said, in French, as the gay creature stood in doubt for a moment before she stepped aside and spoke to some one within respecting the admittance of the applicant.

"Oui, oui, ma fille," was enough, however, to decide all hesitation on the girl's part, and the next moment Sibbald Carew stood within the clean though humble apartment which was the sitting-room of the cottage.

Its inmates consisted of an elderly female of sixty

or more years, a young woman of perhaps a third of her age, and the girl who had opened the door to the stranger; and Sibbald's quick eyes had taken in their peculiarities with no little curiosity even while courteously explaining to the elder female the difficulty that had driven him to the refuge of her cottage.

"You are welcome, monsieur," she said, in accents that had scarcely the ring of a native tongue in their tones. "Cora, set a chair," she added, turning to the girl, while the young woman who formed the third of the party continued to employ herself with her lace work, though from time to time she darted a sharp glance at the strange guest.

"And take his cap and overcoat and put them to the fire in the kitchen," the dame continued as she noted the drops standing on Mr. Carew's attire.

Cora obeyed, and the gentleman permitted her to occupy herself with the divestment of his large wrap, perhaps for the sake of observing unnoticed her striking and rare beauty. Not that it might have been so attractive to ordinary eyes as to the refined discernment of the experienced connoisseur in female charms.

In truth the girl was too young and undeveloped to display to advantage nature's lavish gifts, but the graceful, lithe, slender figure had already attained middle height and promised to become of a most perfect elegance in stature and moulding. The refined features would soften into feminine roundness, the large gray eyes settle into a less prominence than they occupied in the thin face, and the glorious wealth of dark chestnut hair was capable of becoming any adornment that taste and skill might devise.

"Merci, mademoiselle," he said, as courteously as if it had been a peeress who assisted him, when Cora had taken possession of his belongings, "a thousand thanks."

But the girl did not seem to hear or heed him, for at the moment she passed the young woman's chair she unluckily caught the reel of thread that depended from the work and not only brought it to the ground but broke the links and perhaps pulled the lace work itself in the accident.

"Bête," ejaculated the indignant embroidress, with a smart slap administered at the same moment on Cora's graceful shoulders; and a dark frown and a muttered wish that the offender was never to be her torment more showed that a deeper feeling than passing annoyance occasioned the disproportioned anger.

Cora did not cry, though the colour flew to her pale cheeks at the sharp, tingling blow. And the old lady, half timidly, interfered between the belligerents.

"Cora, go on, my child. Adèle, you are too sharp. She did not mean it. The gentleman will wonder at your being so angry with a trifle."

"As he likes, I don't care. She is a perpetual torment," said Adèle, angrily.

And, gathering up her few belongings, she hastily went up a few stairs from the apartment to the chamber above, while Cora closed the door between the sitting-room and the little out-house that they called kitchen, as Sibbald suspected to enjoy an undisturbed burst of tears.

"The sisters do not seem to be quite as united as might be wished," said Mr. Carew to the old dame. "I fear I was the cause of this unlucky disagreement."

The old lady shook her head with a rather sad smile.

"You are English, are you not?" she said, in that tongue, with an accent that unmistakably betokened her own origin.

"Certainly," replied Sibbald, with a smile. "Yet, though I presume you are a countrywoman of mine, you and your daughters speak French like natives, good dame?"

"I have lived here twenty-five years, and sometimes seem almost to have forgotten my own language," she said, with a melancholy smile. "And, moreover, they are not my daughters," she went on, "no, neither of them, though one of them may be some day, and the other, poor child, I love as well as if she was, with all her funny ways."

Mr. Carew got interested, though he scarcely could have defined why.

"You surprise me, my good lady," he said. "I certainly put those handsome girls down as your own. Have you no children then? Are these orphans that you have taken, and not sisters either?"

The old lady was silent for a moment.

"I'm sure you're a gentleman, sir, by your look and speech," she said, "and it's very seldom an Englishman comes to this part, or that I can speak my mind freely, as I often long to do, but I think I cannot be wrong in telling you, sir, and being a stranger it can't signify."

Sibbald could not forbear a smile.

"Well," he returned, "I suppose I have some pretensions to being called an English gentleman. My father was an earl, and I hope I have not by any wilful dishonour forfeited the rank I inherited. So if you like it will give me no little pleasure to hear your mystery, good dame. I do not know by what other name to call you," he added, apologetically.

"My name is Falconer, sir. Some folks say we have come from an ancestor who was Falconer to a royal prince, but dear, dear, it's all nonsense to think of such things now. But, to go on. I have been a widow these twenty years, and our son was but a child of eight or ten when his father died. He went to sea, sir, a mere lad, before he was twelve, and a fine, manly little fellow he was. And, dear me—would you think it, sir?—on the third voyage he took he came back to me with that child Cora for me to bring up, and just for pity, sir, because she was a poor foundling, whom no one cared for, and got kicked about among the natives more like an animal than a child."

"And, for Heaven's sake, who was she then?" said Sibbald, with eager interest.

"That's just what no one knows, nor ever will know, sir," returned Mrs. Falconer, sadly. "The story's just this, sir. The babe was saved from a frightful wreck in the vicinity of Santa Cruz when she wasn't above a year old, and no one could tell who or what she was. And one of the natives took a fancy to the infant, and brought it up like her own for a while, but then she died, and the husband didn't care for a child that wasn't his own, and when my boy saw her first she was a little creature of some four or five years old and half starved and terrified to death with the brutes she lived among."

"And so Rupert—like a soft-hearted lad that he was—bought her for some beads, and cloth, and tobacco, and what not, and what was immensely sharp for his age—he got hold of the clothes she was shipwrecked in, which had been saved—as I fancy—in the hope of gold, and which he bought for as much as he gave for the child herself. Dear, dear, I was vexed enough when I had her first, but I got fond of her when my boy went away again, and she seemed like something to love and amuse me—all alone as I was."

"Then the young woman—Adèle I think you

called her—did not live with you then?" asked Mr. Carew.

"No, no. She's a niece of mine, that is, the daughter of a sister of mine, who married a Frenchman, and she's very fond of Rupert, you see, and I fancy a bit jealous of poor Cora, though she's such a child, and that's what makes the ill will, sir, and I'm sorry enough for it. You see Adèle has got a nice, snug little dowry, and it would be a thousand pities if Cora came in the way of the wedding. I'm sure my boy would like Adèle, only he's a sort of idea that Cora belongs to him. I often think if I had a chance of getting rid of her I'd take it, though I should fret terribly when it was done. Yet it wears one's life out to have one eternal snap and snarl at every turn. And I can't part with my niece, because I promised her mother on her death bed to take charge of her."

Perhaps Sibbald Carew wondered whether the young heiress's dowry made the pledge more binding than it would otherwise have been.

But the thought which the story suggested to him was very different to that in the mind of the garrulous speaker.

And the faint sound of a passionate sob that came indistinctly yet suspiciously through the half-closed door confirmed the wild yet odious fancy he had conceived.

"And what is your opinion of your son's feelings respecting these rival claimants on his regard?" he asked, carelessly.

"Bless you, sir, he's quite foolish about Cora; and yet she's not half so good as Adèle in many things. She won't do anything but read and strol about unless it is for me or him; and then, to do the child justice, she'd wear herself to the death if we wanted her. Why, she sat up for eight nights running when I'd rheumatic gout, and yet she wouldn't sit half an hour together at lace making nor to mend her own clothes. No—Adèle's the wife for my Rupert; and that's one thing that makes me want Cora away; and then, to be sure, she's not much above half his age, and Adèle's twenty next month."

Still Mr. Carew mused on without interrupting the old dame.

He was maturing and weighing a strange scheme in his brain that must be expeditiously arranged with all its weighty consequences—one tenth part of which he could not imagine at that fateful moment.

There was something irresistibly attractive to his nature in the portrait of that passionate, devoted, wilful girl, and the desolation of the position in which an adverse fate had placed her; and with his characteristic impetuosity he threw himself into the breach.

"Mrs. Falconer," he began, "I am, of course, a total stranger to you, yet I think you may have heard or read of the Earls of Treville, whose names are not unfrequently brought before the world both in the French and English papers."

"Yes, sir; I remember the name," she replied, eagerly. "And more so because when I was young I was housekeeper in a family that used to visit with the earl that was then, and I remember seeing him once at our place. And, now I come to think, you're not unlike him, sir, though I dare say he'd be your father, or maybe your grandfather."

"Well, well, that will not much signify if you are satisfied that I am what I represent myself to be—the younger son of one of those earls, and the brother of the present one. And my present object in giving you all this genealogy," he went on, with a half-scornful smile, "is to assure you of my ability to fulfil the promise I am about to give in return for a favour I want to ask of you, good dame."

"Of me, sir?" she said, opening her eyes to the very full. "What can a poor woman like me do for a grand gentleman like yourself? You must be laughing at me, sir."

"You have given me shelter, at any rate," he returned, laughingly; "but what I want is something very much more permanent in its nature. I want you to give me this same unmanageable protégée of yours, this wild Cora of the seas."

Mrs. Falconer crimsoned to the very borders of her neat cap.

"Nay, sir, nay. I may have talked freely, perhaps, about the poor child, but I'm not so bad as that, sir—and I hope you won't say another word, or I might perhaps forget myself, as I'd be sorry to do—only I'm an honest woman, and a mother, and—"

"Stop, stop, my good dame," he interrupted, with a half-kindly, half-scornful smile. "You are running off on the wrong tack altogether. I am an old married man, with a daughter a year perhaps younger than this young creature. And what I was about to propose was to take charge of her, and place her with my daughter as a sort of attendant and companion, till she is old enough to be placed in some more prominent capacity either in my household or some suitable and safe position elsewhere. What say you to this plan, my good lady?" he went on,

with more anxiety than he chose to betray for the success of his proposal.

Mrs. Falconer sat mute and open-mouthed.

"Take away Cora, sir! Why, she'd never go!" she gasped out, at last.

"Would you give your consent if I obtained hers?" he asked, quietly.

"Well, it's hard, very hard, and yet you see, sir, there's no chance for her here, where I don't know any one hardly—except just my neighbours, and only stop because of my boy and Adèle liking me to stay where her parents lived and were buried. But then he'll be in a terrible way when he comes back to find Cora gone—and—he might fly off from Adèle all the worse for vexation; only, to be sure, Cora does get prettier every year, I must say, and it's as well to part them for good. I'm sure I don't know what to say for the best," she went on, despairingly.

"Will you let it hang on the girl's own decision, and may I speak to her alone and freely?" he asked, quickly.

"Well, as to that, sir, you can try, but I don't think she'd go—no, not if you offered her all your gold, unless it happened to please her. However, there's no harm in your trying. If she should like it, why, it might be all for the best," she went on, brightening up as this more cheerful view presented itself.

"Then, as my time is pressing, will you call her at once and allow me to settle the business without delay?" he returned, with perhaps the slightest possible tinge of contempt in his tone.

Mrs. Falconer rose as briskly as her lingering "rheumatics" would allow, and went in her usual rather tranquil gait to the door of the inner room.

"Cora, Cora—come here!" she called, in the crooked tones of old age. "Quick, I want you directly, mon enfant."

There was a moment's pause, as if the girl hesitated in her obedience.

Sibbald Carew waited with more eagerness than he could have believed could be excited in his mature heart, by any suspense save where one interest which had long existed for him was concerned.

Again the summons was sounding in the hushed silence.

"Cora, child, where are you—what are you about? Hasten, for minutes press," repeated the old dame, impatiently, in her foreign French, which even after that interval lacked the accent and the idiomatic precision of the native speech.

The rustle of a female dress was heard slowly and reluctantly approaching, and the next moment Cora's tall, slight figure appeared within the doorway between the apartments.

"Cora, child, this gentleman wants to speak with you. Listen to him and answer him with truth and gratitude," said Mrs. Falconer, preparing to ascend the short staircase in quest of the truant Adèle. "You are free to decide, my child," she added, "only I wish you to remember you may never have the choice given you again."

Cora's large eyes turned from one to the other with a kind of defiant pride and astonishment, but ere she had time to speak Mrs. Falconer had disappeared round the sharp turn of the steps, and Mr. Carew stood between the retreating figure and the hesitating girl.

"Pardon me, mademoiselle," he said, with a deference that he felt instinctively compelled to show to the grace and beauty of the humble girl, "but I must ask you to obey your mother's commands and listen quietly to what I have to say—without haste or passion."

The beautiful face blazed ominously in its warm glow of vexation.

"Who told you I was passionate?" she answered, quickly. "And how dare you reproach me, when you are a stranger?"

"You told me," he said, smiling calmly; "and, as to my reproach, it is a request not a reproach. I think you have sense and good feeling, and that makes me wish you to use them."

"Go on," she said, stamping her foot impatiently. "I don't want to be vexed nor scolded. Rupert knows that, and he never vexes me."

"I will try not to vex you either," returned Mr. Carew, with a slight annoyance in his tone, "and if you wish to serve Rupert you will listen to me and not like a proud, generous girl, as I believe you to be. Cora, Mrs. Falconer has told me he saved you from great misery and hardships, this Rupert; would you like to serve him in your turn?"

"Yes, yes, with my whole heart—my life if I could!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands eagerly. "He is my only friend, the only one who ever loved me—good, noble Rupert."

"And could you sacrifice a little present pleasure, could you endure a little pang for his sake?" asked Sibbald, watching the changes of that strangely mobile face.

"Yes," she said, briefly, "you don't know me or you would not ask."

"Then you will agree to my proposal; you will

come with me, and leave Rupert's home and friends," said Mr. Carew, deliberately. "Listen, Cora, and try to calm yourself, for I am going to say what may perhaps rouse your high spirit to fiery heat. I am rich, and a gentleman. I have an only daughter, a little younger than you, and it is my especial care to give her happiness and make her worthy of her birth and the fortune that will be hers. I want you to go with me to be her companion. I will charge myself with your future when my daughter no longer requires your services. Will you come?"

"As a servant to mademoiselle?" she said, with a look that might have befitted a princess.

"Well, no—certainly not," he replied, hesitatingly. "Rather as an attendant in her recreation hours and a companion in her studies, so far as they are suitable for you and will do you service in your after life."

She shook her head determinately.

"No, I will not go. Rupert would miss me, he would not be pleased. I will not leave his home."

"Then you do not love him," he said, quickly.

She did not reply, but a bright light flashed over her fair face, and then her lips parted in a contemptuous smile more significant than words.

Mr. Carew grew ever more interested in this singular girl with her romantic story and her rare gifts.

"I will explain what I mean," he said, firmly, "though it may perhaps pain you and make you angry. You are the child of beauty here. With me you would be independent and return service for service. If you were away Rupert would be more prosperous. He would obey his mother's wish, he would marry his cousin, and have money to prevent his working so dangerously and so hard. While you are here he is distracted from her, because he is sorry for you and looks on you as his peculiar charge whom it would be base to desert for her. Do you wish this, Cora? Are you not too proud and too grateful for such meanness, such selfishness?"

"It is false—false!" she exclaimed, vehemently. "He loves me, dear Rupert. He thinks it no hardship to have me for his young sister. And Adele is jealous and vain. No, he could never love her—never."

It was a study to read the unconscious workings of the child's heart, to trace the dawning of woman's love and rivalry in the young spirit.

"Then I was mistaken. You will hang on Rupert's charity, sow discord between him and his mother, and prevent his prosperity," Mr. Carew said, coldly. "I am sorry. I would have saved you from such a remorse as you will one day feel. I would have been your true friend and guardian as long as you needed and deserved it, and trusted my only child, my own fair Netta, to your companionship. You have disappointed me—you are less noble than I believed, and I must depart alone."

Large passionate tears were swelling up in the girl's eyes, but she crushed them behind the hot lids, and her voice had a constrained sadness of tone when she spoke—albeit the throat was swelling with sternly subdued sobs.

"Did Mrs. Falconer wish it—did she throw me off and trust me to a stranger?" said Cora, slowly.

"I am not altogether a stranger—she knows my family—she can hear of me—she can have all needful proof of my kind and good intentions for you," returned Sibbald, more gently. "And there is little time for choice. I depart for England this night; either you will accompany me or lose this noble chance of proving your grateful love for Rupert. And in after days I may serve him still more by my interest than I can at present, if you are worthy of my giving you this fresh happiness."

"Cora, child of the winds and waves," he continued, with a smile that few could resist in its rare fascination, "you will but come to your natural island home, and fulfil the destiny that has been marked out for you. It is not from a mother or brother I would take you, it is from the grudging charity of strangers—to the free, glad room-pense of rendered service that I would transfer you. Cora, sweet girl, will you not come? You shall never repent. It will be to an atmosphere of love and luxury, of refinement and repose that I shall conduct you. Nor shall you be alienated from your childhood's friends," he went on. "You shall have the happiness of repaying their scant kindness a hundredfold. Will that not be a grand delight for the foundling—the stray waif on the world's shores?"

His voice was rich, tender, and low, his eyes were full of gentle, touching softness, and the whole face and form had a refined charm in every look and line that was a strange attraction for one brought up among the humble sailors and fishermen of that busy, cosmopolitan town.

Still she shrank back with an indefinable dread of that cold plunge into the future which the unknown invited.

"And your wife," she asked, suddenly, "will she welcome the stranger orphan?"

He literally started at the unlooked-for question, so foreign from what he would have expected from a young, unfettered girl.

"She is in the angel land," he said, gravely, "her home is not here. Only her child betokens the existence she once blessed on earth! But," he added, in a lighter tone, "there is a presiding mistress in our home—my sister, Lady Emily Carew, is the head of my household, and will remain so till my daughter takes her place. Now for your final decision, Cora," he went on, impatiently. "There is no time to hesitate. Either accept my offer or remain to taste the bitter result of your folly—hated and perhaps reproached from those whom you have burdened and perhaps dragged down into the dust."

Cora started as if stabbed by an arrow.

"No, no, no," she exclaimed. "It shall not be—never. I will go—yes, if it kill me I will go. Only—don't speak to me—nor—let—her. I cannot bear it."

Sibbald Carew in a measure comprehended the girl's feelings.

He bowed gravely and silently to the hurried behest, and then summoned Mrs. Falconer by a sonorous call that sounded through the small tenement.

"Mrs. Falconer, your ward consents to become my charge. It will be needless to make preparations for her departure since all she wants can be so easily obtained. Only I should like to take the clothes you informed me are the sole remains of her infant history. They might one day be useful for the searching out of her parentage."

"That is just what is out of the question, sir," observed the dame, anxiously. "I dare not give them up unless my son were at home; they are his, you see, since he paid for them, and I should anger him greatly if he found they were gone."

"More than if he found the wearer gone, is that it, Mrs. Falconer?" said Sibbald, with a slight sneer. "Well, you must know best as to the value attached to each. And perhaps the next visit I pay to Boulogne I may be so fortunate as to meet this knight-errant and purchase his booty. Now what am I to call my new ward?" he continued, with an interrogative glance.

"St. Croix my boy called her, because you see it was in Santa Cruz she was found," replied the dame, coldly. "And as to the rest, sir, you may be quite sure that my Rupert isn't a gold hunter. No, poor boy, he's more in the way to give than to receive, and that you'll find out if you push him too far, sir," she added, with a resentful toss of the head.

"Then am I to consider Miss St. Croix is ready to accompany me?" asked Sibbald, without vouchsafing any further reply.

Mrs. Falconer gave a sort of uneasy assent and stood for some seconds mute, and as if were transfixed by the suddenness of the transition of the girl from the home of her childhood to the custody of a stranger.

Perhaps it was best so. Perhaps the outraged affection, the innate pride numbed for the moment the sharp pain of the parting, and the girl moved as if in a hideous dream when at last roused to a sense of her actual position.

"One moment," she said, as Sibbald made a warning movement towards the door, "I will be back directly."

She flew up the staircase to the room where Adele was sulkily attempting to repair the damage involuntarily inflicted on her beloved lace fabric.

Cora cast herself on the astonished girl's neck and kissed her with impulsive vehemence.

"Adele, farewell," she murmured, chokingly. "I am going away. Do not let him hate me, and be kind to him, make him happy; promise me that, Adele, and I can bear all—al!"

The sharp, dark eyes of the French girl were fixed in astonishment on the passionate features of the speaker.

"Really, Cora, you must be mad. What does all this mean?" she said, coldly. "You derange me altogether. For Heaven's sake do leave off these ecstasies, and leave me in peace to see whether your awkward carelessness can be repaired."

Cora rose from her knees, on which she had cast herself in her vehemence, and turned slowly from the spot.

"Heaven help him, poor Rupert!" she murmured, "and help me, his cherished foundling, in my bitter parting."

Alas, poor Cora! she little guessed in her almost childish inexperience the effect of time and of separation in changing and blunting the ardent affection of earliest youth, nor the temptations and the trials that would well nigh smother the memories of her childish days.

The last sharp sorrow was endured.

Cora had bidden farewell to Rupert's mother, to her who had been hitherto as a parent to her own helpless childhood.

Fearless and strong, she endured rather than returned the weeping caress of the half-remorseful dame, and left the cottage which had sheltered her early years with only one sharp shudder as she crossed the threshold.

Fortunately for her, Sibbald Carew could read and comprehend her mood, and without wearying consolations or irritating gaiety he conducted her in silence to the hotel where the meal he had ordered was awaiting his arrival.

CHAPTER II.

No graces can your form improve,
But all are lost unless you love.
While that sweet passion you disdain
Your veil and beauty are in vain.
In pity then prevent my fate,
For after dying all regretters to the late.

"NETTA, my dear, here are letters from your papa," said the stately Lady Emily Carew, as she entered the schoolroom of her young niece at the pretty, tasteful manor house which was the country residence of the younger branch of the ancient family.

"Well, aunt, what are they about?" answered the girl she addressed, who was at that moment busily employed in the last pages of a novel. "Really you quite startled me by coming in so unexpectedly," she continued, with an impatient toss of her pretty head.

Lady Emily looked about as perplexed as a dignified settler would be at the impudent gambols of a toy terrier, alike beneath his resentment and irritating to his dignity.

"Netta, my dear," she again began, placing herself so completely between her niece and the window as to obscure very effectually the waning light, "I wonder when you will discard this flippant insouciance, which so ill becomes your age and your station, and assume the manners of a girl of high birth and breeding. You are no longer a child—that is, not a complete thoughtless child," she added, correcting herself. "Of course, at fourteen, you cannot be considered to be out of that period of your life—but—"

"But, Aunt Emily, I am fifteen in two months, and I intend to make papa bring me out when I am sixteen, so I certainly do not mean to be in this miserable school thralldom much longer. If you have nothing better than lectures to give me please leave me to finish my book," she went on, carelessly turning her chair towards the window with her head averted from her aunt.

"Perhaps I have news that may bring you to your senses, Netta," said Lady Emily, angrily. "You are determined to make me repent my folly in indulging you, as I have hitherto done, and in which weakness I have been—"

"Assisted by my being likely to do you credit as the prettiest girl of the season, auntie," suddenly interrupted the wayward beauty, springing up and throwing herself on a low ottoman at her aunt's feet. "And then you make up for it by being dignified, severity itself, to every one else you know, so you can afford to be a dutiful auntie to me, Netta Carew, the destined bride of—"

"Child, child, do not be such a mad cap," interrupted Lady Emily, uneasily. "You would really do a great deal of injury to yourself and to me were you to repeat the plans which I have been induced to confide to you rather to stimulate you to prepare yourself for so high a rank than to fill your head with such idle nonsense. There is no doubt you have beauty, Netta, but you will need more than these gifts to secure the prize I have in my heart destined for you."

"No, I scarcely think any one can deny that I am good-looking," laughed the girl, starting up once again, and viewing herself in a long pier glass on one side of the apartment.

She was certainly most lovely, was the young daughter of Sibbald Carew—fair as a lily with the bloom of a monthly rose mantling under the snowy skin, eyes of bright, turquoise blue, features of perfect and most delicate regularity of outline, and lips that could smile with bewitching archness or pout with the indignant emotions of a petted child. The beautiful face was set, as it were, in a frame of magnificent golden hair, that fell, when unrestrained, like Lady Godiva's, over her petite and graceful figure.

Lady Emily, herself a tall, stately brunette, perhaps regarded these blonde charms with an almost worshipping admiration.

"Yes, yes, you are pretty enough, foolish child," she said, half impatiently, "but there is much to do and consider before we study how to set off your little self to the best advantage. And, for the nonce, there is a change in the arrangements of this part of the household which I look upon with great suspicion and annoyance till it is more fully explained. Your father writes a few unintelligible lines to say that he will be at home to-morrow, and that he is going to bring with him a 'companion for Netta.' Such are his words, though from an expression afterwards used I can scarcely think he is serious in

the announcement. He wishes that an apartment, simple but pleasant and commodious, shall be made ready for the young stranger, but not one of the usual visitors' rooms, and bespeaks my kind reception of the new comer, as if he felt some hesitation as to the propriety of his bringing her in so remarkable a manner."

Netta's fair cheek was scarlet like flame. "Aunt, I shall hate her," she exclaimed. "Papa is bringing her as a spy, an odious rival, to make me study diligently, as he has sometimes threatened in jest. I will not have it; she shall not stay," she continued, stamping her little foot with the miniature passion of a tragedy queen. "Can you not write? Is there not time to stop his bringing the creature to drive me frantic with her upstart, priggish ways? I daresay she is as ugly as old Miss Lawton," she went on, lashing herself into still greater vehemence, "and I hate to have ugly faces near me."

Lady Emily might perhaps secretly doubt whether her niece would prefer rival beauty to the sin of ugliness, but she thought it more prudent to soothe the tempest she had excited.

"Hush, Netta, you must not yield to such unbecoming passions, they will injure your complexion and your voice if you indulge in them too frequently," she said, with a pathetic remonstrance in her tone. "And besides, my dear, you must remember that your papa is not to be thwarted with impunity when he takes a fancy in his head. Listen to me, my dear child," she added, with a lower and more coaxing tone in her voice than she ever used save to this idolized niece, "and we will arrange in a very different manner than your impetuosity would propose for the reception and treatment of this singular and unwelcome guest."

(To be continued.)

An old painting by Murillo stated to be over 200 years of age was sold recently by auction by Messrs. Phillips and Son, of New Bond Street. The subject of the picture is St. Anthony of Padua adoring the Infant Saviour, and is stated to have been formerly in the church of the Capuchins at Cadiz. After a brisk competition the picture was knocked down for 1,200 guineas to Mr. Cox, of Pall Mall.

The Sultan has accepted as a present from the Khedive of Egypt the magnificent service of gold plate which was used at the grand dinner given to His Majesty by his Highness on the 5th July, at Emirghian. The Sultan, in return, has presented to the Khedive a superb snuff or tobacco-box bearing the imperial cypher, and set in rich emeralds and brilliants of great price, the value of which is estimated at fully 20,000*l.* sterling.

It is doubtful if His Majesty the Shah is a good musician. In London he objected to the pretty bagpipes, and in Paris it is reported, after hearing the Persian national hymn—which followed him like his shadow—he inquired of a French general if that were the Marseillaise. When he ascended the Arc de Triomphe he was welcomed by a musical box playing the Persian patriotic air. The feeble effort contrasted strangely with the grand building. It was like tying a butterfly to the tail of an elephant as an ornament.

NEW SPECIES OF LIZARD.—According to *Der Naturforscher*, a new species of lizard has been discovered by Herr Eimar on a bare rock near the Island of Capri. The curious point is that the lizard presents a bluish colour, with black spots on the back, whilst the rock which it inhabits is so similar in colour that the creature, lying upon the rock, can scarcely be detected by sight. Of course the German concludes that natural selection has gradually brought the colour of the lizard into harmony with that of its habitat.

ONE of the most interesting of recent additions to the South Kensington Museum is an original carved wooden door-canopy of Queen Anne's time, removed from a house demolished in Queen's Square, Westminster. Notwithstanding its age and long exposure to the weather, it is in nearly perfect condition. Numerous coats of paint have been removed from this work, and its surface is so clean, and the carving so sharp and clear, as to make it probable that it was painted on its erection more than a century and a half ago. It is placed in the new Architectural Court.

LETTER-BOXES IN LUNATIC ASYLUMS: A HINT FOR LORD SHAFTERBURY.—The Belgian Government has recently ordered securely locked letter-boxes to be placed in all the insane asylums of the country, public or private, in positions where they will be easily accessible to all the inmates. They are designed to allow complaints and suggestions to be made to the authorities in a way independent of any of the officers or attendants. No one connected with the institution can have access to them. They are in charge of the Procureur du Roi of the district, and

the letters which they contain are taken to him weekly for examination. The complaints made are investigated, and if any one asserts that he is sane he is ordered to be examined by medical experts. Abuses are corrected. The system exerts a wholesome influence, and tends to secure proper management in all its details.

PICTURES AT THE VIENNA EXHIBITION.—A critic writes—"Even yet the catalogue is not ready. Many pictures have no numbers, the German rooms are not even mentioned in the official catalogue, and the French pictures must surely have had their numbers all changed by some malicious being, human or aerial, for the majority of them are wrong, and many comically wrong. For instance, two men engaged in a fearful struggle on the edge of a cliff are 'The Slumber,' a repulsive picture in which one man ties another, writhing in agony, to the trunk of a tree, is a 'Portrait of Liszt'; while a brown slave girl, clothed only in her flowing black hair, turns out to be a 'Portrait of the Abbé Rogerson!' Who may be responsible for these mistakes I cannot tell, but nothing seems to be done to rectify them."

CASH THIRTY-TWO.

The ribbon I purchased has faded,
The sky has reclaimed its lost blue;
Yet I see, through the loops softly twisted,
A sorrowful face looking through.

I hear, in the soft, silken rustle,
The waver of ill-shodden feet,
That faltered away on their errand,
Loud chidden to make them more fleet.

I see the poor bread-winner's token
Affixed to the figure so small,
The painfully earnest attention
She gives to their querulous call.

A pallid and sun-wilted blossom,
Unblessed with its birthright of dew—
A weary small life with a label
Affixed to it, "Cash Thirty-two."

A handful of summer days scattered—
Again in the temple of Trade
I loiter 'mid counterfeit roses,
To ask for the yellow-haired maid.

"Ah, that was poor Minnie McGregor!"
The words were so solemnly said,
That I needed to wait for no others
To tell me that Minnie was dead.

They called her one midsummer morning—
The angels, so tender and fleet—
They kissed down the eyelids weary,
They lifted the loitering feet.

They cradled her softly and surely,
Through cloud-land away to the blue.
Does the childish soul, resting, remember
That earth-echo there—"Thirty-two"?

E. L.

SCIENCE.

EFFECT OF SUNLIGHT ON FLOUR.—It is maintained that the inferior quality of certain kinds of wheat and rye flour is frequently due to the action of sunlight on the flour; even when in bags or barrels the gluten experiences a change similar to that occasioned by heating in the mill. The tendency thus imparted to it to become lumpy, and to form dough without toughness, is similar to that of flour from moist grain, or of flour when it is too fresh, or made from grain ground too early, or when adulterated with cheaper barley meal. Such flour can be improved by keeping for some weeks.

ANCIENT WALL-PAINTING AT HENSTRIDGE.—A curious old painting has been discovered on the north wall of the parish church of Henstridge, under innumerable coats of whitewash, and has been laid bare as well as was possible. The picture occupies a space of 8 ft. by 9 ft. 6 in., and exhibits a gigantic figure of St. Christopher, bearing on his shoulder a small figure of the Saviour, whose hand is raised in the act of blessing. The feet of St. Christopher are in water, and around them are fishes. In the background are a windmill, pack-horse laden with corn, and a dog, with a man carrying on his head a sack. There is also a lofty rock, surmounted by a church, and on a projecting ledge stands a monk with girdle and rosary, holding out over the water a lantern hung to the head of a stick. The whole picture is surrounded by a border of lotus leaves. It is said to be too much injured to be preserved, but it will be accurately copied.

PEAT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR COAL.—The great difficulties connected with the preparation of peat as a substitute for coal have fortunately been surmounted, and there is every reason to believe com-

pressed peat will shortly be an article in common use as fuel, both for ordinary domestic and for manufacturing purposes. The fact that the peat coal which will soon be in the market is expected to be sold at less than 10*s.* per ton, and that it is allowed to be as serviceable and lasting as common coal, indicates the importance of this new industry. We understand that peat coal has been lately tried in the engine fires of steamships, and has been found an excellent substitute for pit coal. It is smokeless, or nearly so, and the ash is in infinitesimal proportion to the quantity of fuel consumed. With a properly constructed furnace it is alleged no more peat coal will be required to produce the same steam power than is now consumed as pit coal. If these expectations be realized—and they are not speculative but experimental results—it is impossible to over-estimate the value of this new industry.

COMPARATIVE HEAT AND BRILLIANCY OF THE SUN AND THE MOON.—The Earl of Rosse, in a recent lecture before the Royal Institution, gave some interesting information concerning the various experiments heretofore made to detect the heat of the moon, and then described his own efforts in this line, which are the latest that have been made known. By means of a specula-mirror, a thermopile, and a pair of reflecting galvanometers, made on Sir William Thompson's plan, such as are used for sending messages over the Atlantic cable, the earl was enabled to demonstrate the presence of heat from the moon, but the temperature of the lunar surface still remains far from being determined. "My calculations," he says, "lead me to estimate the heat from the moon as the 80,000th part of that from the sun. Bouguer's experiments give the brilliancy of the full moon as the 300,000th of that of the sun, Wollaston gives it as the 80,172*d.* Zöllner as from 618,000th to 619,000th, and Bond as the 470,980th. The maximum of the lunar heat appears to be a little before full moon; the unequal distribution of its mountains and plains, perhaps, goes to explain this phenomenon."

ACTION OF SULPHUROUS ACID UPON INSOLUBLE SULPHIDES.—Langlois having proved that alkaline sulphites are converted into hyposulphites by the action of sulphurous acid, another chemist named Guerout has repeated the experiment with the sulphides of other metals, and finds that the sulphides of copper, silver, gold, platinum, and mercury are not attacked. The sulphides of manganese, zinc, and iron readily dissolve in a strong solution of sulphurous acid, being at the same time converted into hyposulphites. The sulphides of cobalt, nickel, cadmium, bismuth, tin, arsenic, and antimony are slightly soluble and undergo the same change into hyposulphites; varying quantities of sulphuretted hydrogen are evolved, and sulphur separates. Further experiments, however, indicate that the sulphides are not converted directly into hyposulphites, but are first converted into sulphites which are afterwards changed into hyposulphites. This easy and rapid method of preparing hyposulphite of iron, zinc, etc., having been discovered, it remains to apply it to new and important uses, and such we doubt not will soon be found.

SUNLIGHT FOR THE SICK.—Dr. William H. Hammond, in discussing the sanitary influence of light, observes that the effects of deficient light upon the inmates of hospital wards and sick chambers have frequently come under his personal observation. Most physicians know how carefully the attendants upon the sick endeavour to exclude every ray of light from the apartment; and it must be admitted that the members of the profession are often fully as assiduous in this respect. That the practice, except in some cases of actual disorder of the brain and other parts of the nervous system, is pernicious he is well satisfied. During the early years of the late war he visited the camp and hospital of the regiment stationed in West Virginia. Reports had reached General Rosecrans's head-quarters that the sickness and mortality were something frightful, and he was ordered to examine minutely into all the circumstances connected with the situation of the camp, the food of the men, etc. Among other things he found the sick crowded into a small room, from which the light was excluded by blinds of india-rubber cloth. They were as effectually bleached as is celery by the earth being heaped up around it. Pale, bloodless, ghost-like looking forms, they seemed to be scarcely mortal. Convalescence under such circumstances was almost impossible, and doubtless many had died who, had they been subjected to the operation of the simplest laws of nature, would have recovered.

AMONG the presents given to the Shah, and which was most graciously received, was a beautiful illustrated volume, entitled "Our Navy," which the present popular Mayor of Portsmouth presented to His Majesty. This work will remind the King of Kings of that splendid sight the Naval Review at Spithead and of the honours paid to him by the chief magistrate of that maritime port.



[THE FATAL MEETING.]

THE HEIRESS OF CLANRONALD.

CHAPTER I.

Who knows himself a braggart
Let him fear this—for it will come to this—
That every braggart shall be found an ass.

Shakespeare.

THOUGHTS are like echoes, one startles a thousand others into existence. I began by dreaming over the smouldering embers of a little scene I chanced to witness on a village green years ago; and now the village itself, the rustling trees, the River Wear belting the common like a line of silver, the rolling Durham hills, and far away the dim north country line, and the illimitable sea, all come back to me just as I saw them in the waning brightness of that summer afternoon.

A pleasant village is this little Ryhope, possessing many of the facilities of a town and all the fresh and picturesque loveliness of the country, a clean, thrifty, enterprising little place, framed in on one side by the green hills and rich grazing-lands of Durham, swarming with herds of sleek-skinned cattle and flocks of sheep, and on the other by the solemn Northern Sea, rolling out its silver leagues in the purple sunset. Nearer winds the Wear, its picturesque harbour dimly defined in the golden mist, and its stately lighthouse towering high above the rocky parapets upon which it is reared.

The streets are clean and quaint, often losing themselves in green country lanes, and the abundance of trees and garden plots gives the place a peculiarly bright as well as rural aspect.

That modern little house, with the maple tree in front, and the canary cage in the window, is the home of Lottie Lovel, the Ryhope mantua-maker; and the small, reddish-brown cottage just across, with the chips of leather scattered about the doorway, is the abiding-place of Jacob Doon, or "Grandfather Doon," as the villagers call him, and his two grandchildren, Ichabod and Daisy.

On the hill, just above the village, stands the grand old English church, built in the reign of Queen Bess, and nestling below is the quaint old rectory, the home of its pastor, the Reverend Theodore Tyndale; and on the green bluff farther on, commanding a fine view of the surrounding country, stands the crowning glory of the place, Ryhope Manor.

It is a rare old mansion; one might travel a lifetime and not meet with such another: gray and ancient, with great stacks of chimneys bristling above the tiled gables, and a grim, windy turret, from which a great, sonorous bell clangs out the

hours as they pass—a gloomy, ghostly old place to look upon, yet wondrously attractive when one has passed between the solemn sphinx heads that guard its grand portal.

The porticoes are supported by huge stone pillars, and the carved oaken door leads into a spacious hall, floored with polished oak and lit by a great semicircular window of richly stained glass, through which the sunlight filters pale and ghostly upon the stately rows of portraits of all the dead-and-gone Ryhopes that line the tapestried walls.

Beyond this is a second apartment, a kind of state drawing-room, still grander and loftier, with stained windows, draped with silken hangings and furry carpets woven in many a gorgeous device.

A great black-oak staircase leads upward to suite after suite of magnificent apartments and to the library, which is the crowning appendage of the manor.

It is like the other apartments, lofty, and lit by deep Gothic windows. The furniture is of the same antique pattern. A cabinet of minerals, coins, and other relics, collected by the scholarly baronets since time immemorial, occupies a niche near the window; a quaint old harpsichord fills another; then from floor to ceiling, packed in double files, are books of every possible description.

A glorious park, broad and green, and shaded by giant oaks, surrounds this grand old manor; and, in addition, there is an ample garden filled with every possible plant, and a hot-house flaming with tropical fruits and blossoms.

A long flight of white stone steps leads down from the terrace to a smooth, green lawn, which is bounded by a curve of the river; and in the rear, solemn with ancient yews and storied marbles, is the old Ryhope graveyard; and surrounding all are fertile downs, rolling hills, and hundreds of peasants' homes, over which the Lord of Ryhope Manor rules and reigns.

On a corner of the village green, near the seat of the national school, the scene transpired about which I was going to tell you when I dozed off into this dream.

But we will stir up the embers and begin again afresh.

The July sun, half-way down behind the green circle of Durham hills, threw back long, slanting rays of light, gilding all the stained windows of the old manor, as a troop of noisy children came rushing from the door of the school building, shouting and rejoicing over the prospect of a whole month's holiday.

After a momentary pause the majority scampered

directly homeward; a few amphibious boys, thrusting their dog-eared spelling-books into the hands of younger sisters, ran down to the river, and, scarcely waiting to divest themselves of their scanty garments, plunged, duck-like, into the rippling waters; while a small group, girls mostly, halted at the great gate of Ryhope Park to concoct plans for the future.

"You'll come up to-morrow evening, won't you, Daisy?" said one of these, a dainty little miss, in a blue frock and white pinafore, with a profusion of flossy hair beneath her Leghorn hat, addressing a slender, poorly clad girl with a dark face and strange, dusky eyes.

"Dunno, shan't have time," she replies, twirling the leaves of her book with her dark, thin fingers and gazing absently out to sea.

"Oh, yes, you will, Daisy," continued the other, in a sweet, coaxing voice. "We're to have such a nice, nice time, and papa wants everybody to come. Supper on the lawn and music and dancing under the trees, so very nice—you must come, Daisy."

A slight colour rises in the girl's dark cheeks, and her dusky eyes begin to glow as she replies:

"To-morrow's market day, you know, and I've all the nosebags to make, and grandfather wants a pair o' shoes bound besides; and I mayn't get 'em done 'fore night, and if I do"—with a sudden gust of passion—"I shan't leave Ichabod."

"Why, no, indeed," says the other, "Ichabod must come too."

"You don't want Ichabod, May," continues Daisy, passionately; "and there's no use pretending you do."

Little May draws back in grieved astonishment. "You don't want him," Daisy goes on, growing more and more excited. "No one wants him, and no one needn't want me. I want no one to love me that don't love Ichabod."

Young as she was May Ryhope must have been sensible of the sublimity of Daisy's devotion to her deformed brother, for tears rushed to her blue eyes as she spoke.

"Oh, Daisy," she cried, "you know I like Ichabod; you know I meant him to come too! Don't I always ask him? Didn't I bring him a rose this morning, and give him my drawing-paper yesterday?"

Daisy is silent for a moment, then she says, slowly:

"But why didn't you mention him just now when you asked me?"

"Because I wanted to ask him myself," replies May, promptly.

"Did you really?"

"To be sure I did. I think he likes me to ask him

Don't you remember how he wouldn't come to my birthday party because I only sent him word?"

Daisy's dark face grows dazzling, and she throws her arms about May and begins to sob hysterically.

"Oh, I love you because you like Ichabod. I love you, May."

The baronet's daughter does not quite comprehend the cause of Daisy's tears, but she strokes her brown cheek with her dimpled hand and says, softly: "Don't cry, Daisy!"

Poor Daisy. Tears are the natural outlets of all her emotions, whether joys or sorrows. But she does not indulge in them long; she is drying her eyes with the corner of her apron, when a sharp voice arrests her attention.

"Don't strike my dog again I tell you!"

The words came from the lips of a small, weakly looking lad, painfully deformed about the feet, who was endeavouring to protect a beautiful little terrier from the cruelty of a large boy, who stood near with a light stick in his hand.

"Don't strike my dog again," continues the cripple, his eyes flashing. "Strike me if you like, but don't strike my dog."

"I wouldn't touch you for anything," replies the larger, the Baronet of Ryhope's son and heir, "but I'll strike your dog when it suits me."

"No, you won't," continues the cripple, his cheeks blanching with rage as he puts out his crutch to stop him.

But the baronet's son is very quick.

"Won't I?" he cries, derisively, giving the poor little terrier a sudden blow, which sends him trembling and whining between his master's feet.

Daisy makes one great leap, and, with her tears still undried, and her off-locks streaming, stands between them like a young heroine.

"Now," she cries, fiercely, her great eyes shining, "strike him again if you dare—if you dare, Eustace Ryhope!"

Eustace does dare!

He makes a feint with his cane, but she catches the end and holds it firmly, though he whirls her round and round in his efforts to get it loose.

"Don't, Eustace—please, please don't!" entreats little May, catching hold of his arm.

But he shakes her off, and, wrenching the stick from Daisy's hand, is in the act of giving the affrighted little animal another blow when the cripple grips him by the collar.

"Take your hands off, you club-footed beggar!" he shouts, growing white with passion; "take 'em off, or I'll—I'll—murder you!"

"I'll stand by you, Ichabod! Keep your hold!"

These words, spoken in a ringing, resonant voice, come from a lad who sits upon the roots of an oak, busy over the rigging of a miniature vessel.

Almost by the time the sound of his voice reaches them he is at the cripple's side.

"Now then," he cries, baring his bronzed arms to the elbow, and facing the baronet's son with a look of good-natured defiance—"now, then, strike away if you like—you'll find your match!"

Eustace wrenches himself free of Ichabod's feeble grasp and makes a determined lunge at the terrier.

But quick as thought the new comer intercepts the blow, and, possessing himself of the stick, sends it hurtling out into the middle of the river.

"How dare you throw my cane away? I'll thrash you for it if I live," shouts Eustace.

The boy squares himself again, without a shade of anger on his bold, good-humoured face.

"Come on," he says; "I'm ready!"

The heir of Ryhope Manor hesitates for an instant.

There is an untold amount of strength in those brown, brawny arms, and in the broad chest, half visible under the open bosom of the blue sailor shirt.

He would rather not risk a combat, but the eyes of his companions are upon him—they will laugh at him if he back out, and, with all his Ryhope blood, Eustace dislikes to be laughed at.

Stung to desperation by the unpleasant strait into which his own ill nature has placed him, he makes what he intends to be a destructive blow; but his antagonist parries it with graceful ease, and in a twinkling, by a dextrous and unlooked-for movement, he lays the young gentleman at his length upon the sward.

"Now," he says, holding him down with one knee, "promise to let people's dogs alone, and to mind your own business!"

"Let me up!" replies Eustace, sullenly.

"Promise first."

"Let me up, I say!"

May is sobbing wildly, and Daisy, who has watched the proceedings with bated breath, now comes forward and touches the young champion's arm.

"Let him up, Jack," she says, brusquely.

Jack releases his hold in an instant, and Eustace

scrambles to his feet and walks off with an air of sullen haughtiness.

The schoolmaster gets round by this time, and Jack is back upon the oak root, whistling over his rigging as quietly as if nothing had happened.

"See here, Mr. Herrick," he cries; "haven't I got a fine ship? I mean to launch her to-morrow."

"Did you build her yourself, Jack?" asks the master, smiling.

"All myself, sir. I mean to have a real ship when I'm a man, Mr. Herrick. My father had one, you know—the 'Albatross'; she was burned in the Chinese waters."

He bends over his rigging for an instant, a suspicious moisture dimming his bold black eyes.

"Won't you come down and see me launch her to-morrow afternoon, Mr. Herrick?" he continues.

"Yes, Jack, but you mustn't think too much of ships and neglect your books, my boy," says the master, smiling. "Your father was a scholar as well as a sailor."

"I know it, sir," responds Jack, proudly, "and I mean to be a scholar too; I want to be just like my father, Mr. Herrick."

"And so you are, as like as two peas," says Mr. Herrick, as, with his ship in his arms, the boy runs off to join his companions.

Ichabod was ahead, with his little terrier trotting behind him, when they reached the cross-roads, one of which led into the village and the other up to Ryhope Manor. But May managed to overtake him.

"Ichabod," she cried, coaxingly, laying her hand on his arm, "I want you to come up to-morrow evening; Daisy's coming! We're to have music and dancing, and no end of nice things. You'll come, Ichabod?"

Ichabod shakes his head.

"Oh, now, Ichabod," she continues, "don't mind about Eustace. He may be cross; he's cross to me. But I want you to come."

"He called me a club-footed beggar," says the lad, with quivering lips. "I can't come; don't ask me." May's round, sapphire eyes filled with tears.

"I'm always good to you," she sobbed; "isn't it so, Ichabod?"

"Yes, May," he answered, passionately, his little thin face reddening, "you're always good to me, always; and I love you better even than Daisy and grandfather—better than all the world. But don't ask me to come—I can't. I shall be better at home, and you can send me the book you promised me; that will be just as well."

"Maybe it will then," agrees May, wiping her eyes; "and I'll send you and grandfather some plum cake, and Saturday I'll come and we'll go and get the big strawberries you found down by Basset Lane, won't we?"

Ichabod nods pleasantly.

"And see here, Ichabod," she continues, turning over the leaves of her book, "you shall have this too. Isn't it lovely, Ichabod?"

She takes out a dainty sheet of tinted satin paper, with an exquisite moss-rose painted in the centre and some lines of poetry beneath. Her mother had only given it to her that morning and she prized it very highly. Remembering how much pleasure such trifles afforded us in our school days, we know how to appreciate little May's generosity.

But Ichabod shakes his head as she holds it toward him.

"It's too pretty for me," he says; "keep it yourself."

"No, I shan't; you shall take it. I shall think you're angry with me if you don't."

His sensitive lips quiver as he receives it, but he utters no word, and the rest of the party come running up.

"We're going to see Jack launch his ship to-morrow," cries Daisy, shaking back her black locks, "and I am to name it, am I not, Jack?"

"Yes," says Jack, eyeing his ship proudly; "and she deserves a pretty name, doesn't she, Ichabod?"

"That she does," echoes Ichabod, heartily. "And, Jack, I've a little pennon at home; you may have it to run up from the mast-head."

Jack's eyes danced like stars on a winter night.

"Won't it be glorious?" he cries. "I'll make mother come down to see it. 'Twill seem most like having father back again."

The last words falter a little and he winks his black eyes hard.

"I'll come by to-morrow," he adds, "and bring the last I made for grandfather, and we'll all go together. Good-bye!"

CHAPTER II.

This is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering
happier things.
Tennyson.

ICHABOD and Daisy stroll along the narrow green pathway, round the triangular bit of lawn, pausing

now and then to pluck a wild flower or to watch the sunlight on the river; the little terrier running on before them, leaping and barking, all three evidently enjoying the cool, dewy silence of the closing day. But, like all other pleasant things in life, this dewy silence soon ends, and they emerge into the noisy little village, and, striking into a dusty by-street, they walk briskly on toward their own cottage.

Grandfather sits in his old leather-covered chair, beneath the maple tree, for there is a maple tree there, as well as in front of Miss Lottie Lovel's home, but the two are wondrously unlike.

Miss Lottie's is a young and growing maple, with eager blood throbbing in sappy veins through all its vigorous branches; a tree that needs only a single kiss from the reddening lips of spring to thrill it into multiplying life, and cover its branches with superabundant foliage, which through all the summer long rustles and whispers a thousand mystic messages of love, to be borne by the winds and sunbeams to its unforgetten kindred growing along the reedy margins of distant rivers, or in the shady hearts of far-away forests.

But the maple tree beneath which Grandfather Doon is sitting is a lone and isolated centenarian, without kith or kindred on all the face of the earth. There must have been a day when it was a green, withy sapling, but it was away back in the dim ages, long before the first Ryhope rode out to battle, long before the great old manor on the hill was dreamed of. And still it stood there, seamed and ringed and roughened, lifting its great branches, black and spectrelike, against the blue sky; a few tufts of green upon its topmost boughs, like unto the last tender hopes that linger about an old heart just ready to drop into the grave.

The old man, with his thin, white locks and old-fashioned garments, and the quaint old chair in which he sits, seem strangely in keeping with the old maple tree; indeed everything about the cottage and the cottage itself wears an ancient look. The weatherboarding is of a dingy colour, between brown and red; the chimney has a tumble-down look, and the sharp, sloping roof is thickly covered with greenish black moss; even the stone step at the door is scooped out in the middle by the friction of long and constant wear.

The first room is small, with only one window, beneath which stands a cobbler's bench, surrounded by rolls of leather and piles of half-worn boots and shoes.

The strip of carpet before the fire is sadly faded. So are the chairs and the curiously ornamented sideboard, and the little clock on the mantel looks as if it might have begun to tick coeval with time itself.

There is another room, filled with cooking and culinary articles, and a flight of precipitous steps leads up to a dark, low loft.

There is not an article anywhere that is not absolutely necessary; none of the pretty toys and trifles that go so far toward making up the beauty and attractiveness of home; nothing but bare walls and the few absolute appendages of everyday life, unless we mention a few books huddled together on a corner shelf, and some green bottles in the fire-place; and even these seem to have caught the prevailing aspect of stern indispensableness, just as a young face catches a look of sorrowful maturity by constant contact with the old and careworn.

But let us pass through the low door, out upon the rear portico, and into the small garden; and we pause in amazement.

The portico is hung with baskets and trays of light wicker-work, filled with every species of flowers—roses, red, white, and cream-coloured, green geraniums, purple heartsease, sweet peas and running vines.

And in the mist hangs a green cage, from which pipes a yellow goldfinch.

The black soil of the small garden-plot is full also of every species of tender plant and shrub, and shut away in one corner is a glass-covered case, filled with great waxen lilies and camellias and flaunting tropical blooms.

A strange sight, this fresh, blooming garden, to belong to the gloomy, reddish-brown cottage overshadowed by the antiquated maple tree.

Grandfather Doon and his grandchildren have not always lived in this unpretending little home. In that case they might have grown to love it, for the tender influences of long association make up in a measure for the lack of other attractions, and we get to love our very privations, just as we love the plain but familiar faces of an old and tried friend.

The old man and his two little ones had no such tender ties to reconcile them to the little reddish-brown cottage; they dwell therein, tortured by ever-present memories of a brighter and happier home.

Away across the green Durham downs, in the heart of the rich grazing pastures, stood an old-fashioned English farmhouse, with grassy yards bordered by rows of beehives, and cool, wide rooms, through whose great windows came the breath of purple lilacs and summer roses.

This old farmhouse had been their home for years and years back, the home of their ancestors.

Grandfather had lived there in the days of his youth. There he had married; there his children had sprung up like olive plants about his hearthstone, and there, too, he saw them depart, one by one, and take their places by their mother's side in the old orchard burying-ground till only one remained, a son, the father of Ichabod and Daisy.

This son was a strange man, silent, studious and unsocial, but he loved his old father, and the two dwelt together in tenderest peace.

But it chanced in some of his summer wanderings that his son met with a blooming girl, living quite obscurely amid the Kentish hop-fields, and earning her bread by doing plain sewing for her wealthier neighbours.

His heart was touched.

It seemed such a pity for so beautiful a flower to blush unseen.

He determined to transplant her into a richer soil, where she would bloom in perfection; never dreaming that her nature might be indigenous.

She was willing enough to be transplanted; and for a time she grew finely, and her poet husband was in transports. Then her leaves began to wither, her brilliant colours to fade, and the poor fellow found too late that the change did not suit her.

He had committed a grave mistake; the face that had so dazzled him was not as he had fondly believed a virgin rose, folding leaves of beauty over treasures of rare perfume, but a plain, rustic dahlia with no merit save its brilliant colouring.

His wife was not his mate; and never could be; any more than the stupid robin, chirping amid the grasses and pecking at the cedar boughs, could mate with the morning skylark.

His disappointment was keen, but the mistake was his own, it was too late to undo the deed; and with the spirit of true usefulness he set himself about making the best of it.

He could never be happy, but he would make her so. But what such one-sided experiment ever succeeded? She, poor woman, dimly conscious of her non-adaptedness to her new position, and half-fraught of her grave, scholarly husband, soon began to pine for the familiar scenes and easy habits of her early life.

Of this ill-starred union two children came, the first, a puny, deformed boy, whom the father in the bitterness of his heart called Ichabod; the last a dark-eyed baby girl, whom the old grandfather insisted on naming Daisy, after a lost one of his own, whose wee feet had toddled from the household hearth down to the silent graveyard.

The boy grew up shy and delicate, with a marble-like face and great, solemn eyes, that half-frightened his poor mother; as for the girl, no desert oak was ever wilder; and indeed she reminded one of an untamed filly, with her flying feet, and shining, sloe-black eyes and elfish, raven hair.

The poor mother comprehended her children even less than she did her husband, and her long-suppressed discontent broke out in querulous complaints and childish ill-temper.

The husband, finding little comfort at home, plunged into business, into speculation, a thing for which he was utterly unfitted, leaving his wife to stir her weak complaints unheeded, while the old grandfather and the two children wandered through the green uplands and milky orchards about the old homestead.

But at last there came a day which broke in upon their dull, torpid life like a keen blow.

The father and husband was brought home cold, dripping, lifeless, flung up from the dark waters; beneath which, in his blindness, he sought to bury the regrets of a mispent, aimless life.

The shock was too much for the poor, weak wife; she died also, and they were buried side by side, and the old man and his two little grandchildren were left alone, and utterly destitute, for the pleasant old farmhouse and all the rest of their earthly possessions were swept away by the son's mad schemes of speculation.

But grandfather had sturdy old blood in his veins—the Dooms were come of a good stock, and could trace back their pedigree to a peerage and a grand old Scottish castle. Grandfather was not the man to despair.

With the two children he turned his back on the home of his boyhood and sought shelter in the red-brown cottage, and sustenance from the scant earnings of a cobbler's bench.

And there we find him at the commencement of our story.

CHAPTER III.

In nature there's no blemish but the mind;
None can be called deformed but the unkind.
Shakespeare.

True to his word, Jack Turf came over to the cottage on the following afternoon, and sitting in the summer sunshine, under the sparsely leaved branches of the old maple tree, he shaped and polished the last that grandfather needed.

The old man received it with childish gratification, calling Jack "a deft lad, too handy w' the knife not to come to something more than common."

And then, with the red pennon of St. George fluttering from the masthead of the miniature vessel, the three children went down to the shore of the river.

Quite a number of the village children were there awaiting them, and, to Jack's infinite joy and surprise, not only Mr. Herriock, the schoolmaster, but Sir Roger Ryhope, of the manor. With a proud gleam in his black eyes the boy-sailor bears his treasure down to the water's edge, and Daisy, with a vivid blush brightening her brown cheeks, goes through the ceremony of giving her a name. The "Albatross" she calls her, in memory of that other vessel burned in the Chinese waters years before.

Jack's bare, brown chest heaves, and a mist obscures his eyes, at the sound of the familiar name—he remembers, with a vivid pain, that night when the news came from London that the "Albatross" was burned, and he was fatherless, and his widowed mother, sitting on the sunny bank, with the same cruel pain piercing her heart, wipes away her trickling tears.

The breeze swells the white sails of the little vessel, and flutters its streaming pennon, bearing it proudly out upon the sunlit bosom of the Wear. Jack claps his hands in ecstasy.

"Oh, isn't it grand!" he cries. "See how she breasts the current! Watch her pennon, how gallantly it floats! Oh, I'll have a vessel when I'm a man; I will—and you shall name her too, Daisy!"

Daisy nods her black head.

"We'll call her the 'Albatross' too," she says.

"Yes, after my father's vessel! Oh, won't it be glorious!"

"The boy's born for the sea," remarks the schoolmaster.

"Transmitted instinct," suggests Sir Roger Ryhope; "I believe in it."

"So do I, in a measure," replies Mr. Herriock, turning up his wristbands and preparing himself for a grave argument; "but you know, Sir Roger—"

But the world was spared this learned discussion by an unforeseen catastrophe. A sharp stone thrown by some unseen hand, hurtled through the air and struck the little ship just as she rose upon the bosom of a sunlit wave, tearing away the mast that carried her streaming pennon and plunging her headlong into the water.

Jack's eyes fill with tears of anger and mortified pride, and the muscles in his brown arms work nervously as he glances keenly around for his cowardly enemy. But he is nowhere to be seen.

"Poor Jack," says the schoolmaster; "his too bad—he was so proud of his ship."

The baronet's face wears an uneasy look.

"Tis shameful," he responds; "whoever did it deserves to be severely punished—such sneaking, underhand acts argue badly for a boy's character. Where's Eustace? I have not seen him this afternoon."

The schoolmaster glances around, but Eustace is not to be seen.

Sir Roger sighs heavily, and his pale, intellectual face looks like the face of a man for whom life holds but little comfort.

"Yes," he continues, drearily, "I believe in transmitted instinct; every day convinces me that disposition and character are just as transmissible as feature and expression—and—"

But Daisy, whose black, lynx eyes have been scanning every point, interrupts him with her clear, resonant voice.

"Look yonder!" she cries; "in the top o' the big oak."

All eyes follow the direction of her pointing finger, and see snugly roosted amid the topmost boughs, the baronet's son, the future lord of the manor.

Jack eyes him with a savage expression, and makes for the trunk of the oak, but some sudden thought seems to deter him; he returns, glances covertly at Sir Roger's troubled face, and says, manfully:

"Oh, well, we won't bother—I can build another—I'll set to work at her this very night."

The baronet gives him a grateful look, then advances, and lays his hand on his head.

"You'll make a man, my boy," he says, "and do honour to your father's name. But come, let's hurry on to the manor—Lady Ryhope doesn't like to be

kept waiting. Come, May; gather your young friends, don't leave one behind, Come, we wait you all—and all Ryhope. Come, the sun drops lower, and the rooks are coming home. Let's hurry, or Lady Ryhope will lecture us for being so tardy."

He leads the way, making an effort to be merry, but the smile dies on his lip, and his face relapses into its old look of fixed despair. The entire little party follow him, with the exception of Ichabod. He turns in the direction of grandfather's cottage.

"You had better come, Ichabod," calls May, coaxingly.

His delicate lips quiver, and a wistful light fills his soft brown eyes, but he shakes his head sadly and hobbles away, whistling to his terrier.

The sun is quite down by the time he reaches the cottage, and the first silver beams of the rising moon fall like a halo round grandfather's head as he sits in his leather chair under the old maple tree.

A pair of newly finished shoes lay on the stand beside him. Ichabod took them up without a word, and, entering a small, close room, lit a tallow candle and set himself to the task of binding them. They must be finished and carried home, and the scant pittance drawn to buy their bread. His was a wearing, ignoble kind of existence.

The boy evidently has some such idea in his mind as he sits down to his work, for a frown contracts his brow and impatient discontent looks out from his great, dreamy eyes. A strange picture he makes, sitting there in the dim light—the face of a poet surmounting that poor, puny body and those misshapen feet; and the soul within—could human eyes have seen it—a young eagle, struggling to soar, beating its wings against the cruel bars beyond which it cannot escape.

He works on steadily till his task is done; then he arises and takes from a battered case an old violin and sits down in the moonlight. The instrument is old and out of tune, his hands are untutored, but the sounds he produces are strange and thrilling. Beethoven or Mozart may have produced such melody in the first dawn of their inspiration.

The moon soars higher and higher; all the circling Durham hills and the placid bosom of the Wear blaze with her silver glory. The lighthouse towers up, its blinking lamp almost extinguished in the misty splendour. Somewhere amid the hawthorn hedges a nightingale is singing.

And the boy plays on, thrilled to the very soul by his own music. And thus, still playing under the shimmering shadow of the maple leaves, Daisy finds him when she returns from the banquet at Ryhope Manor.

CHAPTER IV.

Revenge; at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils. Milton.

It is a mellow September afternoon, some years after the close of our last chapter—the blue sky arching mile on mile above the rolling downs, a southern wind undulating the golden grain-fields and showering the mellow fruit from the abundant orchard boughs.

The home of the Ryhopes sits proudly on the summit of the bluff that overlooks the Wear, a little grayer perhaps, but unbarren by storm or time; like the haughty race who have owned it for centuries it seems to be endowed with a charmed power, which defies the ravages of death and decay.

The Ryhopes have always been a long-lived race; from the hands of one gray-haired baronet to another the noble title, the princely income, and the old manor, have descended since time immemorial, and the present incumbent, Sir Roger Ryhope, despite his intellectual pallor and slender figure, has a constitution like iron; and bids fair to live as long as his predecessors. Soberly against his inclination however, for if ever mortal man longed for the release of death that man was Sir Roger Ryhope, thirteenth baronet of Ryhope Manor.

A thoroughly miserable man is this Sir Roger, with his princely blood, his wealth, his enviable position, his fair wife, and blooming children, a man who never knows a day of peace, a night of quiet sleep.

The men of the Ryhope race have always been brave and honourable, but a trifle inclined to dissipation; a little too fond of the wine cup, a little too much given to indulging their lawless passions. A man may be a British peer, with the very best blood in his veins, and still be a sinner; and I am afraid that the Ryhope baronets afforded a living proof of my assertion.

They were all hard drinkers, hard riders, hot-headed lovers; men with strong passions that they did not care to curb.

Twenty-five years ago this pale, sad, scholarly Sir Roger was like what all his ancestors had been before him, a gay, hot-headed, thoughtless young man, who cared for nothing but his own will and pleasure.

His father, whose youth had been even more extravagant and reckless, regarded his follies with that abhorrence which a reformed rake, who has long ago garnered in his harvest of wild oats, always feels for the indiscretions of the young, and essayed to control him with a tight rein and strong bit that goaded the youthful heir to the baronetcy to desperation.

He squandered his allowance, bet largely on races, and was heels over head in debt a dozen times before he came of age. But the crowning folly of his youth was yet to come.

Soon after his return from Eton he made a tour through Southern France, and there, in the green valleys of the Rhone, he met a lovely young peasant girl under romantic circumstances, and fell desperately in love at first sight.

Marie was no common girl, her soul was as pure and fair as her face; she was one of those exquisite creations that live only in the poet's brain or on the artist's canvas.

Sir Roger loved her madly, but he would as soon have thrust his head into the pit of a burning volcano as suggest to his haughty father the idea of making her his wife.

A French peasant girl to be Lady of Ryhope Manor! The young man himself could not repress a smile at the absurdity of such a thought.

Years before, when he was just out of his pinafore, the old baronet had chosen a wife for his only son—Lady Laura Pevensy, sole child and heiress of Sir Burke Pevensy, of Pevensy Hall.

She was growing up, tall and stately, with blue eyes and blonde hair, and high-bred manners, and, better than all, with a dowry of a hundred thousand per annum.

She would be mistress of Ryhope, not Marie the peasant girl.

Yet Roger loved Marie, loved her truly, with that devotion which a man experiences but once in his lifetime.

He would not give her up. And he would as soon have offered sacrifice to Heaven as he would have dared to breathe a word of dishonourable love in her pure ears.

The young man fell into despair, and fled to the wine-cup for comfort. And the ruby liquid not only fired his courage but it paralyzed his conscience.

He determined to win the desire of his soul by a secret marriage. And he did.

Fond, confiding Marie became his wife one dusky summer night in a quaint old chapel under the shadow of the Alpine peaks.

For a year, one brief, bright year, the newly wedded pair were happy.

They lived in a secluded villa near the Rhone, caring for nothing in the wide world.

Marie never doubted her husband, and patiently awaited his pleasure in acknowledging her as his wife, and loved him with a devotion that bordered on idolatry.

But in this Eden of love the serpent entered.

Sir Roger was summoned home to Ryhope Manor by his father. He dared not disobey the mandate, and, parting from his charmer, he hurried across to England.

He found Sir Burke Pevensy and his daughter at the manor, and his father announced to him his desire that the marriage should take place at once.

The young man was beside himself. To confess his folly would be to insure his own ruin—to lose his all. What should he do?

Half crazed with irresolution, he made some excuse for a few days' absence, and hurried back to France—with no settled idea of action, but impelled by his strong love for Marie.

He reached the cottage in the twilight of a summer evening. But Marie was absent. He hurried impatiently towards the river shore, hoping to find her in her favourite haunt. He did find her, but she was not alone.

She stood upon a little rustic bridge, and at her side was a tall, handsome man, his arm encircling her waist.

Sir Roger paused in consternation.

"Marie," the man was saying, "I tell you what I say is true, and you must leave him and go with me."

Marie sobbed wildly and clung to her companion's bosom.

"Oh, if I had never seen him!" she wailed, "if I had never seen him!"

"I wish you never had, the deceitful cur!" cried the other, fiercely. "Let me ever get my eyes on him, and I'll have my revenge! But come—words are idle and unavailing—we must act; you shall go with me—you are mine. Wait here one moment—I will call a carriage, and we will leave this cursed spot for ever."

Marie made no answer, and the stranger rode away in the direction of the village.

Mad with jealousy, and hot from the effects of wine, Sir Roger rushed upon the poor girl like a wild beast.

"You are false to me!" he cried, clutching her arm—"you, for whose sake I have sacrificed so much!"

Lucille turned her death-white face upon him, and her lips moved in a vain attempt to speak.

"Curse you!" cried the young husband, in a frenzy of passion; "you have ruined me and played me false, and you shall die!"

And, without a moment's thought, impelled by an insane impulse, he seized upon her flowing brown tresses and harried her over the parapet of the bridge.

She fell with a heavy plash into the black waters below.

There was a whirling motion for a moment, then a white face looked up full of unutterable tenderness.

The black waters closed over their victim, the Rhone rolled serenely on—Marie was gone!

Sir Roger stood like one turned to stone, looking down where that tender face had disappeared.

But an approaching step roused him—a feeling of guilty fear thrilled through his soul, and he turned and fled for his life.

(To be continued.)

EDITH LYLE'S SECRET.

By the Author of "Daisy Thornton," etc., etc.

CHAPTER XIX.

EDITH in her wrapper and pretty hood was sitting on deck in the large easy-chair her husband had bought for this very purpose. Every possible comfort which ingenuity could devise and money pay for he had procured for her in order to make the journey bearable.

The largest, most commodious room in the ship was hers, with a smaller one communicating with it, so that she need not feel too much confined to one locality, and when all this did not prevail to avert the evils of sea-sickness he and Norah nursed her assiduously until she was able to be lifted in her husband's strong arms and carried upon deck, where, with the fresh summer breeze blowing in her face, she felt her strength coming back, and thoroughly enjoyed the blue expanse of sky above and the deep waters beneath.

Mr. Schuyler walked the planks from first to last as firmly and steadily as a general at the head of his troops; but alas for poor Godfrey.

"You have only to exercise your will a little, and you can keep well enough," he said, with a certain sniff of contempt for the weaker ones. "Pluck is all you need to keep you straight, even when chairs and tables, and shovel and tongs are dancing a cotillion."

This was Godfrey's opinion, when in his clean, light summer suit he stepped airily on board and gave his hand to Bob Macpherson, even then growing pale about the lips and unsteady in his feet. But when they had been out a few hours, and that great lurch came, and the waves broke over the deck, and dashed the salt spray in his face, he too began to turn white, and with the exclamation, "By George," he suddenly disappeared from view, and went headlong into the room where poor Bob had lain from the first, caring little whether his perfumed hair was parted in the middle or not.

Personal appearance was nothing there in that room where the two young men lay, one in the upper, one in the under berth, and both too ill for more exertion than to groan, when a swell, heavier than usual, nearly sent them rolling on the floor.

And how had it fared with little Gertie, the second-class passenger, whose room was small and close and hot, for the window had been closed and fastened since the water came in with a dash and wet the little hard bed? Poor Gertie, how the ship tumbled and rolled and tossed, and how she tossed and rolled and tumbled with it, and clutched at everything in her reach, with a feeling that they were tipping over. And how the cold, clammy perspiration stood on her face and hands, and the dreadful, death-like faintness crept from her feet through every nerve, as, with fearful contortions, her stomach tried in vain to relieve itself, and she fell back, panting and helpless, upon the hard, scant pillow.

It was horrible, and the poor child wished so much that he could die, or that the ship would stop for just one minute, and give her time to breathe, even though it were the fetid air which almost stifled her and made her long so for the hedge-rows and fields now so far away. But Gertie did not die, and the vessel did not stop, and the window was not opened. She was merely second-class, and it was not worth one's while to open and shut windows just when she wanted, and though Mary Rogers did all she could for her child, and brought her many things to tempt

her appetite, Gertie turned from them all, and sobbed piteously:

"I am so ill, so ill. Will we ever be there? Is everybody ill, and are all the rooms as close and hot and small? Where is the pretty lady, Mrs. Schuyler? I wish she'd come and see me. I think I shall be better then. Would you ask her?"

Mrs. Rogers did not know whether she dared or not. She would see, she said, and when that afternoon she saw Edith on deck looking so bright and well she ventured upon some trivial remark as the cousin of Norah, and finally spoke of her little girl, who was suffering so much.

"Oh, yes, Gertie Westbrooke. I remember now. She was to go with us, and you are Mrs. Rogers, Norah's cousin; and the little girl is very ill and uncomfortable; I am so sorry for her. I know just how it feels. Can I do anything for her?"

Mary hesitated and then said:

"She has felt interested in you since the day you were married. She was there."

"Yes, and throw me the pretty bouquet," Edith said.

And Mary continued:

"She talks a great deal of you, and thinks now if you could come and see her it would do her good; but, ma'am, I said how it wasn't likely you would or could do that. Our room is very small and close, the pillows are so hard and poor."

"I do not believe I can go now; I am hardly strong enough," Edith said; "but I will come if she does not get well; and now carry her this soft, warm shawl. It will answer for a pillow. I do not need it at all, and Norah shall take her some oranges and wine."

Mary demurred at the shawl, but Edith insisted, and remembered the oranges and wine, which so refreshed the child that she slept soundly for three or four hours with Edith's shawl for a pillow, and a dream of Edith in her heart.

The next day she was better, and Mary took the shawl back to Edith, who was again on deck, with her husband standing beside her.

"Poor thing," Edith said, kindly; "I am glad she is better. Tell her I'll come and see her by-and-by."

She glanced at her husband, whose brows were nearly together, and whose whole face was overcast.

"Who is this woman, and who is the child you propose visiting?" he asked, when Mary was gone; and Edith replied by telling him what she knew of Gertie Westbrooke and her mother.

Mr. Schuyler could reproach Edith for seeming cold and proud towards the Lyles, to whom he felt that he owed something, but he was far from wishing her to treat people like Mary Rogers with any show of familiarity. There his pride came in strongly, and he said:

"You can send the child any delicacy you choose, and I will see that her window is opened so that she can have air, but if she slept on your shawl, as it seems she has, I desire you to give it to her altogether. You surely will never wear it again. Norah!"

And he turned to their maid, who stood near.

"Take this shawl to your cousin's child and tell her Mrs. Schuyler sent it and wishes her to keep it."

Norah looked wonderingly at him, while Edith blushed painfully, but neither said a word, and after Norah was gone with the shawl Mr. Schuyler continued:

"I do not wish to distress you, my dear, or to interfere with your actions unnecessarily, but I think it just as well not to have too much to do with the lower class unless, as in the case of the Lyles, we are under obligations to them. And as this Rogers child is nothing to us you are not called upon to visit her or treat her as an equal. She will soon recover. Such people always do. I'll go now and speak about the window."

He felt uncomfortable and wished to get away, for he did not quite like the pained look in Edith's eyes, or the pained expression of her face.

Edith herself could not tell why his words hurt her as they did, or why she felt so interested in the girl whom she had as yet never seen distinctly. But she was interested in her, and though she did not visit her as she had intended doing she sent her many delicacies and a pillow from her extra room, and felt almost as much pleased as Mary Rogers herself when she heard at last that she was better.

Poor Gertie had been very ill, and her bright colour was all gone, and her round cheeks looked thin and wan. Very carefully Mary dressed her in her pretty, dark chintz wrapper, with its facings of pink, and then folding Edith's shawl about her carried her on deck, and propping her up with pillows and cushions made her as comfortable as she could. Mary had not demurred at all at the gift of the shawl, and greatly to Norah's disgust had accepted it almost as a right.

"I'm thinking she would not take it quite so easy

If she knew it was his pride which sent it to her," Norah said to herself, but Mary did not know, and Gertie was delighted with the gift, and wondered how the lady could be so generous, when it must have cost at least three pounds, and wondered, too, why she was so kind to her, a poor little girl whom she had never seen.

Though pale and thin, with marks of suffering on her face and in her soft blue eyes, Gertie was pretty still, and made a very attractive picture as she sat in her quiet corner with a book, whose pages she was turning listlessly and trying to read a little, when she heard footsteps approaching her and a voice exclaimed:

"Hallo, Bob, by George if there isn't 'La Soeur,' looking like a little ghost; here, this way," and Godfrey Schuyler, who was also better and able to be up, came quickly to her side, followed by Robert Macpherson, who moved more slowly and showed more signs of weakness than the active, restless Godfrey.

Robert Macpherson had seen and talked with Gertie at her lodgings near Oakwood, and had asked her to sit for her picture, and she had said she would, and a day had been appointed for the sitting, when Mary Rogers interfered and refused in toto, and kept her child so close that neither Robert nor Godfrey saw her again except in her aunt's company or through the window of her room.

Godfrey indeed had only spoken to her once, and that when she sat in the door, eating blackberries, her lips and pretty fingers stained with the juice, and her bright hair falling about her face.

Mrs. Rogers had come upon him then just as he was going to make some flattering speech, and called her little girl away, and he had not seen her since until now, when he esteemed it a great piece of luck to stumble thus upon her with the dragon out of sight.

Gertie knew him and a pleased smile broke over her face and shone in her eyes when he stopped before her and asked if she had been ill and how she liked the feeling of it.

She did not like it at all, and she and Godfrey grew very social and sympathetic as they compared notes, he going far ahead of her of course, inasmuch as he did not hesitate to draw upon his imagination when necessary, while she adhered strictly to the truth.

She laughed merrily at his droll sayings, and their acquaintance was progressing rapidly when he asked what she was reading, and stooped down beside her to see the title page.

Godfrey was very fond of girls, little girls especially, and this one had interested him greatly from the time he first saw her, and now as he bent his face so close to hers that his brown curls touched her auburn hair, and he felt her breath on his cheek, he could not resist the temptation, but snatched a kiss from her parted lips ere she was aware of his intention.

Though rather small of stature Gertie was twelve years old, and very womanly in some respects, and at this liberty all her instincts of modesty and propriety awoke within her, and while the hot tears glittered in her eyes, which flashed angrily upon the offender, she said:

"You stop! You mustn't! You shan't! You have no business to kiss me, Mr. Godfrey, and I am very indignant!"

She wiped her lips two or three times, while Godfrey, who considered it a good joke, and was vastly amused at her rage, said to her:

"Why oughtn't I to kiss a pretty girl like you when I find her all alone?"

"Because I am alone," Gertie replied, with a very wise shake of the head. "Because men like you shouldn't kiss girls like me, whom they don't like."

"But I do like you immensely," Godfrey said, "and think you the prettiest girl I ever saw."

"Hush!" Gertie rejoined, with all the dignity of a woman of twenty. "You shall not talk to me, and you wouldn't either if I was somebody else."

"Who, for instance?" Godfrey asked; and looking him steadily in the face, with her clear honest eyes, Gertie said:

"Mr. Godfrey, if I were one of your sisters would you have done it?"

"Certainly, I have a right to kiss my sister," Godfrey said, and Gertie continued:

"I don't mean that. I mean if you were somebody else and I was one of your sisters?"

"Still wrong," Godfrey said, "for even if I were somebody else and you my sister I would kiss you many times."

He would not understand, and Gertie glanced appealingly at Robert Macpherson, who had been listening languidly, while with an artist's interest he attentively studied the little face which so puzzled and attracted him. As he met her glance he came a step nearer to her and said:

"Let me tell you how to put it. Suppose you are my sister?"

"You are a gentleman born?" Gertie asked, while the young man coloured to the roots of his hair, and answered, faintly:

"Yes, I believe I am."

"Well then," and she turned again to Godfrey, "suppose I was his sister and you were yourself, and you found me a tired little girl, sitting by myself, would you have dared to kiss me then?"

There was in her manner so much sweetness and dignity withal that languid Bob roused in her behalf, and said:

"If he did I'd knock him down," while Godfrey, wholly driven to bay, answered, humbly:

"No, Miss Gertie, I would not, and I beg your pardon, and assure you I meant no harm, but really you looked so pretty, so piquante—"

"You must not tell me that either," Gertie said. "I'm glad if you think me pretty, and glad to have you like me, but you mustn't tell me so. It's very bad, for Auntie Rogers said so. She says young men like you never talk to girls like me for good, and I must not let you."

"What kind of a girl are you, pray?" Godfrey asked, feeling more and more amused and interested with this quaint little creature, who replied:

"I am poor, and have not any relatives except a grandmother, and I don't know where she is. But my mother was a lady, auntie says, and I once lived in a big house with servants, and auntie was my nurse. I don't know where it was or why I left it when my mother died. Auntie does not tell me, and she is so kind, and I have forty pounds a year of my own, and maybe I shall learn a trade, or teach a school, and some time marry respectably, but I'm not the kind of girl for a man like you to kiss and talk to."

"Gertie, you are a brick," came emphatically from the amused Godfrey, who felt a great desire to kiss the full red lips again in his admiration of the child.

But he dared not do it. Indeed there was something about her which inspired him with a respect such as he had never before felt for a girl, and, as he told Robert Macpherson in confidence, he wanted to crawl into his boots when, after his assertion that she was a brick, she lifted her eyes so wonderingly, and said:

"I'm a what?"

"A brick," he answered; "don't you know what that is?"

"Yes, I know it in its place; but I don't know what you mean when you give the name to me."

"Well, it's a compliment. I called you so because I like you and think you clever."

And Godfrey began to stand first on one foot and then upon the other, in his perplexity how to appear well in the mind of this little girl, who was so young and innocent and honest, and yet so old in some things.

"That's slang, isn't it?" Gertie asked. And he replied:

"Yes, I suppose it would be called so, but it is very expressive. Don't you like slang?"

"No, I do not, and I don't see why people should use it so much."

"Do I use it so much?" Godfrey asked. And the girl replied:

"I heard you once at Oakwood, when you did not know I was there, say 'by George,' and 'by Jove,' three times, and you called your father the 'governor,' and one of the maids said she supposed it was slang."

Godfrey's face was scarlet at this reproach, which he knew he merited, and for a moment he did not know what to say. Soon rallying, however, he said, good-naturedly:

"I am rather given to slang—the girls at home nag me about it sometimes, and I do it to tease them; but I'll quit it now, by Jo—I beg your pardon. I did not know I was so given to it, and I will reform, by George! There! that was to finish up."

And Godfrey laughed heartily at himself, while Gertie, too, joined in the laugh, and thought how handsome he was, and what white, even teeth he had, and hoped he was not angry with her.

Presently he said:

"Gertie, if I really try to reform and quit my slang will you promise to like me a little?"

She answered, quickly:

"Yes, and I like you now—a little, you know—though I did not like you to stare at me so when I was in the cab at Mrs. Barrett's gate; but when I saw you in church at the wedding I thought you very nice, and kept on thinking so until you kissed me just now, when I was very angry for a little while; but I'm over it now, and you'll never kiss me again."

That was a fixed fact in her mind, but Godfrey was not so sure of it, and he said to her, seriously:

"Gertie, I am sure you are very good and generous, and I really mean to reform, and I want you to promise me one thing. You are going to Schuyler, I believe?"

Yes, Gertie supposed she was, "but," she added, "I shall not see you of course."

"Why not?" he asked. And she replied:

"Why, don't you know? You are rich and we are poor. You live in the great house, and we are your tenants; that is, I believe auntie is to rent a cottage of your father, if it is not too high. We cannot give much, for auntie lost her shares in the bank last summer, and now she must do fluting and clear-starching and sewing for our living, as she will not touch my forty pounds; that she says is for my education, and I do so want to learn music. We can live on almost nothing, only the rent takes money. Will it be very much?"

"No, not much," Godfrey replied, a sudden thought flashing into his mind, upon which he resolved to act, but not till he had made his compact with Gertie.

"You did not let me finish," he said; "I want to make a bargain with you, which is this: I am to reform, and you are to tell me from time to time if I am improving, and when you really think I am a perfect gentleman you are to let me kiss you again. Is it a fair bargain?"

Gertie considered a moment, and then said, with the utmost gravity:

"Ye-es—I don't believe there would be any harm in it, inasmuch as you did it for pay."

"Then it's a bargain and I begin from this minute to be a gentleman," Godfrey cried.

But his zeal was a little dampened by Gertie's next remark.

"It may be a long time, Mr. Godfrey, and I'll be grown up, and then it would not be proper at all."

Here Robert Macpherson burst into a loud laugh and exclaimed:

"Better give it up, Schuyler. The child is too much for you."

But Godfrey was not inclined to give it up, and said:

"A bargain is a bargain, Miss Gertie, and I shall claim my reward if it is not until you are a hundred. How old are you, little one?"

"Twelve, going on thirteen. How old are you?"

"Eighteen, going on nineteen," was Godfrey's answer.

And as he just then saw his father in a different part of the vessel, he touched his hat to the girl with as much respect as if she had been a princess instead of a nobody, whose adopted mother took in fluting for a living, and walked away to set in train the plan he had in his mind for benefiting Gertie Westbrooke.

She interested him greatly, not only with her sweetness and beauty, but with her fearless, quaint manner of talking to him, and the perfect simplicity she manifested in everything she said. He knew she was not Mary Rogers's child, and that might perhaps have had its effect upon him, and made him esteem her more highly, though he did not stop to analyze the nature of his interest in her. He only knew he was interested, and wished to do her good, and, joining his father, he said:

"By the way, father, have you decided which house you will rent to Mrs. Rogers?"

"Rent to whom?" Mr. Schuyler asked. "Who is Mrs. Rogers?"

He had forgotten her for the moment, but when Godfrey explained that she was Norah's cousin, and foster-mother to the little girl whom he must have noticed if she had come in his way, he remembered that something had been said about her having one of his cottages, but he had not decided which one.

Why, what did it matter to Godfrey?

"It matters this," Godfrey said, "you know my house which you gave me for my own, and let me see to. Perry wrote me a few days ago that the tenant had left it suddenly and there was no one in it. Now if you don't mind I'd like to let it to Mrs. Rogers."

"Certainly, let it to her if you like," Mr. Schuyler said, pleased to see in his son what he thought a business proclivity, and a wish to make the most of his property.

He little guessed that it was Godfrey's interest in Gertie which prompted his son to wish to see her in his own cottage, the best by far of all the houses known as the Schuyler tenements. It was not now like many of them, but it was very commodious and pretty, with a wealth of vines creeping over the porch, a rose tree near the door, from which Edith herself had once plucked the sweet blossoms, and twined them in her hair, for Godfrey's cottage was the very house where Mrs. Fordham once lived, and from which poor Abelard Lyle was carried to the grave.

(To be continued.)

It is stated it had long been the desire of Her Majesty that the painter Winterhalter should come

over once more to England to paint the likeness of the Princess Beatrice, in addition to those he had already taken of her four elder sisters and of the Queen, of whom he had finished many portraits, the first at the age of twenty-three.

STEPPING-STONES.

CHAPTER I.

How'er it be it seems to me
"Is only noble to be good."
Kind hearts are more than coronets,
And simple faith than Norman blood.

Tennyson.

THE Widow Hartley was busy among her nasturtiums. They were gorgeous borders to the paths of her garden on the August afternoon, and their pungent breath came refreshingly to the tired woman's senses after her day's work. Room for vegetables there was not in the small spot, nor for fruits, excepting the raspberry and the blackberry vine tacked against the fence on two sides of the enclosure, and the thrifty row of currants that lined a third.

Instead of more homely esculents there were patches of sage, hoary in leaf and blossom, slender lavender, purple at top, sweet marjoram, summer savoury, mint and thyme, all cultivated by Mrs. Hartley and her daughter Rebecca before seven o'clock in the morning and after six in the evening. There were, moreover, in odd corners, mignonette, feverfew, and other free-blooming flowers and half-a-dozen rose trees hardy and prolific. No runners and no tall standards.

They were variegous of space, and repaid the accession to their demands by overshadowing everything within a radius of a dozen yards, and by one short-lived crop of blossoms a season.

Just attention to these features of the widow's domain, and the contiguity of the same to the city, would have told the acute observer that the cottagers' labour in the sunny parallelogram was not entirely one of love.

He would have divined what was the destination of herbs and flowers as truly as if he had seen every morning at sunrise a covered market-cart halt at the outer gate on its way to town, and receive from Mrs. Hartley's or Rebecca's hand a basket with bunches of the useful aromatics and less useful but prettier bouquets, the dowry yet thick upon them.

About twice a week a smaller basket was added, containing fresh eggs from the poultry pen at the back of the garden—a more hutch, but neatly railed off by lattice work, and kept as clean with gravel and sand as the kitchen floor of a farmhouse.

The chickens were Rebecca's pride and pets. Their coop was built by her brother Ronald in his spare hours, most of it by moonlight or the rays of a lantern held by his sister.

This feat of architecture had been performed three years ago, when Ronald was a student in Mr. Barroll's law office.

A licensed practitioner now, with half an office and sign of his own, and an unknown number of clients, he could not be expected to have time or disposition for such occupation.

He still lived with his mother, however, walking a mile and a half twice a day from the bustling heart of the town to the unfashionable suburb in which her abode was situated.

She did not deem it expedient to remove from it, even to suit his convenience, since it, with the furniture, was all she could call her own in the world, beside her children.

Her only brother, now dead, had given her the house in the earlier days of her widowhood.

He was a moderately wealthy man, but as he had a large family of his own he acted munificently, according to his ideas and those of his friends, when he endowed his sister and her fatherless babes with a home.

There were four children when their father, a clergyman of fair promise mentally but feeble in health, died—Rebecca, Frank, Elspeth and Ronald, the eldest being eleven, the youngest five. The first-born son and second daughter died of scarlet fever two years later.

Fortune bore hardly upon the small household that winter—so hardly that the mother often went hungry during the illness of her little ones that they might not want for suitable nourishment and medicines, and was obliged to send the undertaker's bill to her brother for payment.

But the dark time had one bright spot. Her distress was the means of introducing her to the notice of her pastor, a man appreciative of real worth and responsive to the call upon his sympathies of genuine grief.

His wife exerted herself to procure work for the mother, and he prevailed upon another member of his church, the teacher of an excellent and popular school, to admit Rebecca and Ronald as free pupils.

Rebecca was even then a grave, shy child—too thoughtful and diligent for her years, and wrapped up, beyond the reach of a selfish thought, in love and care for "mamma" and "my little brother."

Toward the latter, a remarkably handsome and sprightly boy, a trifle wilful and comely, but full of generous impulses, the hearts of the benevolent clergyman and his wife especially inclined.

As he grew older, and developed more richly in winning qualities and intelligence, they cast about seriously in their minds for some feasible method of furthering the mother's darling wish—to wit, that this one of her children should receive a classical education, and, "should it be Heaven's will, enter the profession of which his sainted father was a distinguished ornament," she rarely failed to add.

Mr. Vinton, the pious and usually judicious pastor, did not choose the best method for bringing to pass the whole of her prayerful desire when he laid the boy's talents and needs before an old classmate, now an eminent lawyer living in the same city with himself, and besought his aid in Ronald's behalf.

Mr. Barroll made an opportunity of meeting mother and son at the house of his friend, and from that hour they might have dated most of what to their simple tastes seemed the prosperity in which they now dwelt.

Mother and daughter still wrought constantly and patiently at the business the former had taken up at her husband's death—needlework of various kinds—chiefly children's clothing. Before she gained her nineteenth year Rebecca had won for herself no mean reputation in this line of industry, and when Ronald was admitted as a law student in Mr. Barroll's office she had all she could do, and more. But the frugal habits of the family were still kept up. Not an article of furniture had been exchanged for newer since they took possession of the house, and the dress of the two women, although always neat, was extremely plain. That Ronald might be well educated and well clothed, might not be mortified by an empty purse and shabby attire at school, college, or among his fellow students at Mr. Barroll's, was the one object before both in their self-imposed toils and privations, seldom named as such to one another, and never suspected by Ronald.

"He will repay us one day for all we can do and resign for his sake," they would assure one another, brightly, with that steady faith in the nobility of their idol, that confidence in the return of loving gratitude for silent and laborious service which is seen most often in women, and is pathetic to sorrowfulness wherever beheld.

"He shall have a chance in the world!" the sister was wont to stimulate herself to fresh endeavour and endurance by saying.

What was she that Ronald should be defrauded of his rightful mental aliment, stunted in bodily comfort in order to pamper her vanity and love of ease? She craved no higher intellectual food than she obtained from the books Mr. Vinton lent her and Ronald's society.

As for recreation—did she not have her fowls and garden? "Holidays did not suit her, somehow," she had observed when consoled with upon the scarcity of these in her life. After which remark she stitched away busily and quietly, with perhaps an added touch of pallor in her mild face—mild and sensible, almost to prettiness.

Her eyes were soft and clear, her teeth regular, and her smile ready and sweet when others were to be gladdened or cheered by it.

"Yet you enjoyed the one summer you have passed in the country since you have been grown up, my dear," the mother would expostulate.

"Yes, mother, very much."

"And if you would take my advice, daughter, you would repeat the experiment. I am sure it is against my wishes for you to sew so steadily."

"It does not hurt me, mother, and I like it."

She never said less or more on this head—let fall no hint that the history of that short fragrant summer was the one romantic chapter in her experience.

She had passed three months there, taking her work with her, in her father's old parish, among the friends of her childhood, who still revered his memory.

His successor was neither brilliant in the pulpit nor a polished man of society out of it.

His own people confessed that he was a trifle awkward in person and address, and more direct than eloquent in his public appeals to their consciences and feelings; but he was greatly beloved for his warm heart and genuine goodness, and in character at once strong and gentle.

He met Rebecca Hartley, knew and loved her, and after she returned home wrote to ask her to marry him.

She was twenty-three, Ronald seventeen, and at college. Rebecca shut herself up in her brother's now disused room for two hours, with her suitor's letter

on one side of her, the family account book on the other. A careful review of the last year's income and outlay settled whatever doubt she may have dared to cherish respecting her duty. Her mother could not meet Ronald's expenses without her help. Ronald's expenses must be met. The logic was clear, the inference unavoidable.

She wrote a brief, sisterly letter to the Reverend Luke Cotton, declining the offer of his hand, and promising—in what he in his disappointment set down as idle words, a meaningless formula, enjoined by humanity and custom—to remember him always as a dear friend, and to pray daily for his happiness and usefulness.

Then she locked up the letter in a drawer she seldom visited, along with two locks of yellow hair, cut from the heads of her dead brother and sister, and a pocket Bible her father had carried in his bosom and studied for many years, and betook herself anew to her work.

She tried with all her unselfish might to believe that her prayers in the Reverend Luke's behalf were satisfactorily answered when, a twelvemonth thereafter she read the notice of his marriage to a lady she recollected as a good-humoured and wealthy widow, somewhat boisterous, perhaps, but probably that mattered little to him if he loved her—and he would not have married her if he had not been sincerely attached to her, reasoned Rebecca. She even thanked Heaven through very inconsistent tears that she could now devote herself with more singleness of purpose to the task set for her otherwise barren life—the duty of caring and labouring for the dear ones most nearly connected with her by blood and affection.

Ronald graduated with honour, and came home to live.

"I could not think of eating you out of house and home, mother, unless I had the hope of repaying you one day with compound interest," he protested, proudly, when she pressed her invitation upon him. Whereupon the tears stood in his mother's eyes.

"You are a noble boy!" she answered. "I am more than repaid for whatever you may have cost me by the pleasure of having you once more with me. There is not, there never can be, any question of shillings and pennies between us, my son."

"That is lucky—for me!" he rejoined, gayly. He was a pleasant fellow to have about the premises. His laugh, his whistle, his ringing voice, the echo of his noisy boots along the floor and upon the stairs, although almost deafening in the small house, were sweetest music in the ears of the two dwellers therein.

Their life took a different complexion from his presence at the morning and evening meal. His bon mots were laughed at over and over again during the day, his good looks, kind deeds and exalted talents descanted upon as the needles flew, until any one excepting the loving pair would have sickened of the topic.

Strange to say, all this idolatry and the unstinted evidence of it did not render the youth utterly worthless.

At twenty-one he was licensed to practise law, and at Mr. Barroll's instance entered into partnership with his son.

The new firm had fine prospects ahead of it. Barroll, jun., was sharp and shrewd, Ronald studious and energetic.

At the end of a year they paid their way, office-hire, taxes, all their personal expenses, and divided just two hundred pounds between them, nett gain.

Barroll laughed heartily at the result of the settlement, as befitting the son of a wealthy father.

"I'll treat myself to a week at the seaside with that," he declared. "It will be a novel sensation—this sprawling upon one's own honest earnings. Come along, old fellow. All work and no play should have made you the dullest of dull boys by this time. We deserve a lark!"

Ronald shook his head, with a thoughtful smile. "Time enough for that when we divide two thousand. I have another use for my share."

That night he handed his mother a thin book, bound in brown paper. "The Phoenix Savings Bank in account with Mary Hartley," was written upon the cover, and the first page bore the entry of a deposit of fifty pounds.

The widow kept that little book until her dying day, and to the last upon this brief record was visible the tear-blot that stained the new white page on the happy evening when it was first laid open before her.

The Barrolls were people of note in the social world, and through their influence young Hartley gained the entrée of the best circles in society. He kept his footing by means of his personal gifts, his handsome face and figure, gentlemanly bearing and colloquial accomplishments. Few knew or cared anything about his antecedents, beyond the fact that the Barrolls endorsed him, so long as he made their

drawing-room more lively and proved himself to be an agreeable and gallant cavalier to the pleasure-seekers of the other sex.

But the time came when his parentage, previous history and style of living were subjected to severe scrutiny. It suited his taste or was written in the book of fate that he should fall in love at the close of the second year of his professional career with Julie Mebane, the daughter of a rich retired merchant.

She was very amiable and affectionate in disposition, and singularly attractive to the eye, with a sort of childlike loveliness, was a pleasant talker, a sylph-like dancer, a skilful pianist, and as unfit to be the wife of a poor man as any other young lady of his acquaintance.

Mr. Mebane set this unpalatable truth plainly before the wooer when he waited upon him with the tidings of their reciprocal attachment and respectfully asked his sanction to their engagement.

"My child has been delicately and luxuriously reared. I cannot consent to her marriage with a man who has his fortune and name yet to make. Nor—excuse my candour—are your domestic associations such as I should choose for her or for any member of my family. Unless I have been grossly misinformed your relatives belong to quite another grade of society from that in which my daughter has her appropriate place."

"My mother and sister are poor, sir, but they are fit associates by birth and education for any ladies in the land!" retorted Ronald, loyally fierce.

"I do not care to waste time in contesting your proposition," he replied. "They are not likely to form my daughter's acquaintance for some time to come, if ever. You are aware, I suppose, that she is a minor. I shall refuse my consent while the law gives me the right to control her actions. If you choose to marry her when she comes of age I shall disinherit her. Your own income would not keep her in pocket-handkerchiefs and kid gloves. This must be the end of our conversation, Mr. Hartley, and of your visits at my house."

In the midst of his distraction at the untoward sequel of his suit Ronald was too generous to repeat to his mother and Rebecca the father's unkind and ungentlemanly allusion to themselves. Their warmth of sorrowful sympathy in his disappointment was not embittered by the consciousness that they were obstacles in the path of his advancement—they who would have offered their very hearts as stepping-stones could he have used them.

He bore his burden of grief and chagrin "like an angel," thought and whispered the worshipping woman. He certainly presented a brave and manly front to the world at large, concealing his wound from the eyes of business acquaintances and his gay evening associates—from everybody, indeed, save from the four loving orbs to which he was the god of day.

His mother and sister pelted him more than ever now that his clouded brow, hardly suppressed sighs and failing appetite testified to his evil case—Rebecca endeavouring, with tender artifice, to cheat him of sad thoughts by assuming a vivacity which never rightly belonged to her, even in her girlish days, retailing for his amusement weak pleasantries, culled from various sources, and talking incessantly when he was by, lest he should think she had lost heart in the ultimate triumph of true love, as typified in himself and Julie.

Meanwhile the mother ran into grave extravagances in the line of delicacies for the table, such as are generally accredited by those dear old souls with the gift of solacing heart-aches.

She has been thinking of him all the while we have left her standing among the nasturtiums. When she had finished gathering as many of the mock capers as were ready for the pickle jar in the cellar she began to cull a tiny bouquet to be laid by Ronald's plate at supper.

She and Rebecca had fallen into the habit of eating them very early in this warm weather. They felt the need of a cup of tea by the time their day's sewing was done they easily persuaded him into behaving.

On the Sabbath they supped with him, and then they partook, for the only time in the week, of the 'relish' of cold meat, sardines, frizzled beef, or pickled salmon, which was never wanting from his evening repast.

The widow could see between the white curtains of the sitting-room window the round table, with its spotless drapery, antique china plate, cup and saucer, the dish of pink ham, cut thin as a shaving, and the glass bowl of peaches, flanked by a wee pot of cream. Mother and daughter used skim-milk, riled of every drop of richness, that he might fare the more daintily. Through the open kitchen-door stole the scent of burning toast to mingle with the spicy garden odours.

"He is behind his time," said Rebecca, appearing

at the top of the short flight of steps leading to the yard. "His tea will be overdrawn, and his toast too dry, I'm afraid."

Mrs. Hartley went to the gate to gaze down the road, shading her eyes with her hand from the red, level rays of the sun.

She was a small, spare woman, who had been pretty in her youth.

Her eyes were faded and sunken now, her skin shrivelled, and her chin projected more than was natural, by reason of the loss of the teeth she could not afford to replace by artificial ones. Her hands told of washing and ironing, as well as needlework. Her widow's cap was unfashionable in make and of cheap material, and her rusty black dress, although clean, was scant and darned in many places.

Rebecca wore a neat cotton print, blue and white, protected from the soil of kitchen work by a checked apron.

A ruffle of the same finished the dress at the throat, and her hair was plainly arranged in the fashion of five years before, the date at which she had left off being young.

She was now twenty-eight, but there were times when she looked nearer thirty-five. She would not have been mortified had strangers mistaken her for fifty.

Her youth would seem no farther away from her at threescore than it did now.

"I don't see him," Mrs. Hartley admitted, unwillingly. "But he will soon be here. He is the soul of punctuality."

"Of course, I know that he has some excellent reason for the delay, the dear boy. I only hope he may not be too tired to eat," rejoined Rebecca, in fond solicitude.

The two sat down upon the worn wooden step to watch for his coming. They were seldom disposed to be loquacious when left to themselves. They had lived the same life for so many years that they had little to communicate to one another. Nor were they demonstrative of affection, except when sudden sorrow or joy overtook one or both. Months passed sometimes without the exchange of an embrace or a kiss, the while both were profuse of caresses and fond words to Ronald. Still the tie between them was close and strong, more tender and more powerful than either knew as yet.

Each had her own thought as she silently waited in the summer twilight, her tired hands folded, and the warm glow of the West touching the wan faces into a show of comeliness. It died away at length, and the quiet suburb became more still. There were few passers-by, and the children who had filled the air with noisy mirth earlier in the evening had gone home.

How distinctly Rebecca recalled that peaceful hour in after years. True, Ronald's tea would be spoiled, but she was too tranquil in spirit to care much for that, since the mischief could be remedied by five minutes' rapid work. She was glad and thankful that she had some one for whom to work and watch, and that that one was all worthy of the utmost her cares could achieve for his good. She actually blushed once when she caught herself answering the yearning of the woman's heart for home and offspring with Elkannah's loving reproach to his childless wife—"Is he not better to thee than ten sons?" The echo of the distant but familiar footfall aroused both watchers at the same moment.

"He cannot be so tired as usual—he walks so fast," commented the mother, while Rebecca accounted for his haste by saying:

"He is afraid we have been uneasy about him."

The dusk was not yet so deep that they could not discern his heightened colour and the gay smile with which he nodded at them over the gate.

"Ah, here you are," he called out, blithely, while he undid the fastening; "enjoying the lovely evening, are you? What glorious weather."

"It has been pretty warm," remarked the widow, puzzled, yet charmed at the sudden change in his deportment.

He came up the path at a bound, and stooped and kissed them both.

"Has it?" he answered his mother, hurriedly. "Rebecca, dear, where is my lamp? I am going to my room."

He did this for a few minutes every night that he might wash his hands and brush his hair after his walk.

Nothing doubting that he would be down directly, Rebecca set out his supper and lighted a lamp upon the table, the mother seating herself by the tea-urn in pleased expectation.

A half-hour passed and he did not appear. They could hear him walking overhead, with much opening and shutting of drawers and closets, and their wonder waxed into anxiety; their eyes mutely questioned one another in a torturing maze of suspense.

To what had wounded affection and insulted pride

driven him? was the thought of the unsophisticated women.

They hardly dared steal a look at his face when he at last presented himself, fearing to see in it if not the glare of insanity the recklessness of despair. It was so radiant that the bugbears their dreads had fostered fled away in a second.

Always handsome, happiness now glorified him in their sight into unearthly splendour. His hazel eyes flashed with rapture, the sweetest and softest of smiles wreathed his fine mouth.

"I have not time for tea, dear," he said as his sister entered from the kitchen with a plate of fresh toast. "I have an imperative engagement, and it is late already," he added, as he drew out his watch.

He was dressed in his best, and a holiday air hung about him, with which his apparel had nothing to do.

"I cannot go, however," he continued, rapidly, "without letting you into a secret which will please you, I know, because you love me so truly. Mr. Mebane spent an hour in my office late this afternoon. We had a long and highly satisfactory talk—at least to me. He withdraws his opposition to my engagement to his daughter. I am going to see her now."

Mother and sister were clinging to him with tearful smiles and broken exclamations of joy and surprise, more expressive of their love and gratitude than any set phrase of congratulation could be.

"But how did it happen? What does it all mean?" they asked, in concert.

"Mean?" his eyes like great stars, as he raised his head exultingly. "It means that she is the noblest, most courageous, most constant, as well as the most angelic woman that man ever loved. It is all her work; and who could resist her pleadings? Heaven bless and reward her! The devotion of my life cannot do so, but it shall be hers!"

Bright as was the future painted by the lover's imagination that night, it was hardly fairer than that sketched by the two he had left when, the untasted supper having been cleared away, they extinguished the lamp (partly for economy's sake, partly because the rising moon shed a cool, delicious light upon herb-plot and sequestered road), and repaired again to the doorstep to talk eagerly and fondly over the altered prospects of their best-beloved one.

There was no incredulity in their simple minds as to the sincerity of Mr. Mebane's change of purpose. If he was a man of sense and shrewdness—and this was his reputation—repentance must have come with mature deliberation upon the gifts and graces of his daughter's wooer.

As Mrs. Hartley put it:

"He cannot but see that Ronald has not his equal. His daughter will never have another such offer. No wonder he is ready to apologize and recall the darling boy!"

Julie set the matter in a very different light in her narrative to her lover of the causes that had wrought together for their reunion.

"He was stubborn as the rock of Gibraltar for three mortal months," she said, plaintively. "I cannot describe what I underwent in that time. Every day he summoned me to the library, which I came at length to view as a perfect chamber of horrors, and scolded and coaxed me by turns until I was almost wild. He said perfectly awful things about degrading alliances and broken-hearted parents, while mamma cried night and day. At last all this wore upon my nerves and spirits to such a degree that I fell ill, and dear, wise old Dr. Gaines—you know his daughter Clara is my bosom friend—declared to papa that I would never be any better, but would undoubtedly go off into a decline; and papa, who really loves me at heart, told mamma to say to me that I might do just as I pleased if I would only get well. It must be confessed that, now he has given up his point, he is disposed to act very handsomely by us. He behaves beautifully, I think."

Ronald bent to kiss the pretty lips, and evaded a direct reply to her laudations of the man he felt to be a cruel tyrant.

"And you have borne this suffering for me!" he said, instead. "My brave, sweet angel! how shall I repay you?"

"By loving me—and—may I say it?" she replied, peeping around archly into his face.

"Say whatever you like, my pet!"

"Then, won't you make friends with my friends as fast as possible? It is wicked and unchristian to bear malice for bygones, you know. And I am going to love your mother and sister ever so dearly! You will bring them to see me very soon, will you not?"

Ronald coloured at the recollection of Mr. Mebane's gratuitous insult to them.

"I have good reason for not caring to have them come here, dearest. When we have a home of our own it shall be theirs also. I doubt whether any



[RONALD'S HOME.]

fairly knows much about domestic economy. Now my mother is the paragon of housewives, and she would enjoy nothing else so much as ministering to the comfort of my little wife."

Which last word was the signal for the hoisting of a scarlet flag in the tall-tale cheeks of the betrothed maiden, that effected a complete diversion of the subject.

A week later Ronald excited a great commotion in his mother's cottage by announcing that Julie would spend the next evening there.

"She is all anxiety to become acquainted with you," he explained; "and, as I have stated to you, I do not wish you to call upon her until you are formally invited by Mr. and Mrs. Mebane. So she begs permission to come to you quite unceremoniously. I shall bring her to tea. I needn't ask you to give us one of your nicest suppers, mother," he said, with his brightest smile.

He was yet unspoiled by the world. Home was home still, so dear and lovely to the heart that it could not be homely to the eye.

"I shall do my best, but it will seem very plain fare to her, I am afraid," answered Mrs. Hartley, dubiously.

"You are mistaken. She never ate such short cakes, never tasted tea like yours, in her father's house. Riches do not mean genuine comfort, mother. Then, again, she is the dearest, most artless child in Christendom. It would amuse and interest you to hear her descant upon love in a cottage. She will be enchanted with your bird's nest. She is a sensible little creature too. She has not accepted a poor man without a tolerable appreciation of what lies before her—does not expect to begin the world in the style in which her parents live."

In consequence of this reassurance Rebecca and her mother awaited the promised visit with more desire than solicitude. They had suspended their ordinary labours that day that Julie might see their snug "bird's nest" at its best. Every window-pane was polished to diamond clearness, every inch of paint scoured, the brass door knobs shone like gold, and there was not a thimbleful of dust in the whole house. Clean muslin curtains were parted over the parlour windows, and the room was redolent of pignonette and musk-roses.

Thus much achieved they gave their exclusive attention to the supper. In compliance with Ronald's hint the incomparable cakes must be made ready, and broiled chicken being pronounced an eminently suitable accompaniment, Rebecca made a free-will offering of one of a pair of pullets she was fattening with an eye to Ronald's birthday dinner.

The process of skilful broiling requires a cook to be much over the fire until it is completed, and although Rebecca bathed her face in cold water before performing her hasty toilet, and had recourse to an open window and a fan after it, her complexion was still a muddy pink, forehead, nose and all, when Mr. Mebane's carriage set down Julie and her lover at the wooden gate.

The Hartleys were hardly prepared for the spectacle of the equipage, Julie's note to Ronald, proposing to drive by for him at the hour designated for their visit having been sent to his office that forenoon.

"It is papa's pleasure that we should use his carriage as if it were our own," she mentioned, complacently, not once imagining that Ronald might be less grateful for the condescension than she was.

The widow and her daughter had but one glimpse of an organdie dress, a lace shawl, and a white hat with a fresh, rosy face beneath it, before they hastened to the front door to greet her.

The port coachman, in the act of turning his vehicle, beheld the embraces, took full-length portraits of "Mr. Hartley's people," with the style and dimensions of their abode, and drove off, gleefully concocting a spicy dish of scandal for the servants' suppartable.

Ronald saw the fellow's supercilious stare and grin, and with the sight arose the first acknowledged misgiving as to the possibility of the intimacy to which this visit was the introductory measure.

Julie's heart-shrinking did not come until later. In the excitement of the meeting and the pleasant shyness that weighed down her eyelids at finding herself a guest in Ronald's home, she noted few of her surroundings until, her bonnet having been carried off by Rebecca, and her shawl removed by Mrs. Hartley, she took courage to perceive that she was sitting in an immense arm-chair covered with flowered chintz, with a stool under her feet—"for all the world as if I were going to have a tooth pulled!" was her saucy thought. Then her eyes moved covertly around the apartment. The ceiling was low, the windows small, the carpet worn and faded, the furniture was clumsy in shape, and bore the marks of much, although careful, usage.

Ronald's mother, whom she had almost trembled to meet, so enthusiastic were his encomiums upon her native dignity, her refinement of feeling and speech, and her practice of all the best graces of humanity, was a thin little woman, with the "queerest short-waisted dress on, and a fright of a tarlatan cap," evidently home-made.

Rebecca had donned her one-coloured silk to match her mother's best bombazine. The material was

good, and the hue, a soft shade of umber, became her age; but it had small flowers of the same colour embossed upon the fabric, and figured silks were "out" ages ago, to say nothing of its hot, uncomfortable look on this sultry afternoon, while the wearer was constrained in demeanour, overheated, and fagged in visage.

"How odd it all is! How unlike they are to him!" reflected the modest-looking fairy, with the melting blue eyes and golden hair, whose waves of drapery overflowed the arms of the old chair into flescy mountains upon the dingy carpet.

Involuntarily her regards sought Ronald. He was watching her apprehensively, she fancied deprecatingly, and the gaze brought a gush of warmer emotions to her heart.

"After all, I am engaged to him, not them!" she comforted herself by recollecting, "and he cannot help their peculiarities. They are very nice people in their way, I daresay, only I am not used to meeting such."

She set herself, forthwith, to playing the fascinating; was respectfully affectionate to the old lady, friendly with Rebecca, generous but not patronizing in her praise of the flowers and "the celebrated cakes which Mr. Hartley had rightly described as superior to the celebrated cheesecakes of Damascus." She enchanted them all, Ronald's delight approximating intoxication.

"You were never so beautiful, so bewitching before, my treasure!" he said as he drew the tiny hand within his arm for the homeward walk. "Mave you had a pleasant evening?"

"Oh, very!"

The tone was too effusive to be hearty, and his next remark showed that this was not lost upon him.

"I warned you that you would find mine a very humble home, and its inmates very unpretending, dear Julie. You have seen so little of other circles than your own that I feared lest you might be shocked—might not be able to do justice to the intrinsic worth of the two to whom I owe more than all the world beside. Your conduct to-night has shown me that I was unjust to you. I cannot tell you how happy I am that you like my mother and sister. Henceforward, I feel, we shall be one united family."

"I loved them before I saw them," returned Julie, apparently inattentive to the last sentence. "How could I help it when they are so fond of you? Isn't there such a maxim as: 'Things which are equal to the same are equal to one another'?"

(To be continued.)



[THE DEVIL'S OWN.]

FICKLE FORTUNE.

By the Author of "Maurice Durant," etc.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

Revenge maintains her empire in the breast,
Though every other feeling freeze to rest.

Treason.

On through the dark night sped the spurred and oft-whipped horses back to London, whence their weary and jaded brethren had scarcely arrived.

The night gives place to gray dawn, the dawn to a glorious sunrise and a calm morning.

On still they speed, whirling the close carriage from side to side, dashing it over the stones and through the ruts of the badly kept road.

On, on still till the dusk came again and at last the lights of the great city twinkled through the mist of evening, then the dull, monotonous hum of the great hive of industry and pleasure aroused the dim, dark figure lying hidden among the heavy cushions of the carriage.

All the long, tedious way he had lain thus, motionless, save for the constant and keen glare of his dark, angry eyes, save for the continual biting of his almond-shaped nails.

Motionless and silent he had lain but with a brain busy at fresh plots and a heart all on fire with rage, hate and disappointment.

He can scarcely think in this close, stifling carriage; he can scarcely realize the blow which has fallen upon him.

Over and over again he repeats, with scarcely moving lips:

"The will found! Hugh Darrell returned!" But although he repeats the truth he can scarcely force its reality upon his hot and feverish consciousness, and he grinds his teeth with impotent impatience, muttering:

"Curse them! How slow. Why do they not get on to London? Once there in my own room, quiet and undisturbed, I can think, think. But here—What are they stopping for? Changing horses! they are always changing horses at every mile, the knaves! And Lucille may be waiting! Why don't you go on? Twenty guineas if you reach London within the hour!"

On they go till the old carriage rattles and quivers over the round stones of the metropolis, and at last the jaded, foam-covered steeds pull up, and almost fall, before the great town house of Captain Reginald Dartmouth.

It all looks quiet and almost deserted.

He paid the men—over the stipulated sum—and entered his mansion.

"Where is the secretary?" he asked of the des-

creet footman, who stood behind the hall porter ready to receive the coat and hat of his lord and master.

"The secretary, sir?" replied the footman, staring. "Did he not go with you, sir?"

"No," curtly answered his master. "Where has he gone?"

The man does not know; he explains with evident fear and trembling that Mr. Stanfield had the captain's cob saddled and brought round and started within half an hour or so of the captain himself.

The master stared for a moment with astonished anger, then paced the grand mosaic-floored hall and ascended the wide and Turkey-carpeted stairs.

"Tell Mr. Stanfield to wait my bell within his room," he said, and passed on to the room that at infinite expense had been made sound-tight and secretive as the tomb.

At the door he turned again, and in a voice which sounded unnaturally indifferent gave orders that any lady wishing to see him should be admitted without question.

Thus done he touched the secret spring and entered the room.

It smells close and stifling, and with a long breath of weariness and suppressed excitement the defeated schemer, by the aid of a small taper, proceeded to light the small opal-studded lamp.

Then he sank into a chair, disregarding his hat, that fell with a crash to the ground and rolled beneath the table.

He sat staring at the wall paper, quiet at last, to think.

But he cannot; all he can do is to sit quiet and motionless, tracing the pattern of the wall and murmuring:

"The will found! Hugh Darrell returned! The Dale lost!"

Gradually the stupor disappeared, cleared off before the exercise of his stern will, and he raised himself a little in his chair and resumed the tracing of the paper.

But another and more fearful feeling superseded the stupor.

He can think, but of what did he think?

Not of the future, which he alone desired to ponder and consider, but of the past—the black, hideous, crime-stained past!

Across the splendid Turkey carpet, moving with the slow, monotonous regularity of a shadowy, phantom desert caravan, his past deeds parade.

He sees himself on the wall, a vicious, heartless, yet ambitious man, a club lounge and gambler.

He sees a weak, beautiful woman, girl rather, clinging to him with all the trusting helplessness of a wrongful love.

On glides the panorama, and shows him himself, changed not, but developed into the schemer for the squire's wealth.

Darker grows the picture, and he recoils in his chair as he sees the weak, girlish form of the ballet girl hanging upon him and withering beneath his cruel, heartless, unmanly words of desertion. He sees what he has not seen in reality, but pictured often, that graceful form, that girlish, trusting face lying dead—dead—upon the floor, dead by her hand, which his cruelty has nerved to—suicide!

Ah! he shrinks, cowers beneath that picture there upon the gaudy carpet till the cold drops of perspiration stand like icicles upon his white brow.

But the panorama goes on and grows darker.

Now comes another girlish form, shrinking from his unhallowed mockery of love—shrinking, flying—and leaves a white old man, who, raising himself upon his bed, shrieks for mercy, while the murderous hands choke the life breath from his old, parched lips.

Still on, and more swiftly, the phantom glides past, and the pictures change and glow with gold. The shrinking, fascinated plotter beholds himself enshrined in success.

Wealth flows about him in rivers of gold. Luxury waits upon his footsteps, and another woman crosses his path—this time a stately, queenly form, with a coronet upon her brow and a dreamy look of undying purpose within her eyes.

The silent, solitary watcher sees that this is the woman, Lucille Vitzarelli, his last dupe, who is to meet him to-night—for whom he now waits.

And as he looks, half waking from his sleepless dream, with a mocking smile at the phantoms his overwrought brain has conjured up, the figure of the woman is obscured by a dark shadow, and is already, somehow or other—how he knows not—the likeness of Treason and Death.

This is the last strain upon his calmness.

With a suffocating cry he rises from his chair and staggers upright.

The visions were dispelled, but the reality was approaching, for even as he pressed his hot hand across his fevered forehead he muttered, hoarsely:

"I have been asleep and dreaming. I am tired, worn out, and not myself. Let me be calm—Lucille will be here soon!"

The door opened noiselessly, and the queenly form of Lucille, Countess Vitzarelli, stood before him.

He almost believed himself still mocked by a dream, but a long look at the figure, which he noted almost unconsciously was garbed in black, and at the face, which was white as death and strangely stern, he knew that it was her in the flesh.

"Lucille," he cried, springing forward, "you

have come, my queen; I am ready and waiting. I am tired, and have just returned."

He stopped, struck silent by the expression of her white face.

It had become stone-like and rigid with majestic hate and scorn.

"Lucille!" he breathed, stepping back and staring at her. "What—for the love of Heaven—what is the matter? Are you ill? Has aught happened? Speak!"

She spoke.

"Reginald Dartmouth, look upon that!"

And she extended one white arm, in the hand of which was a small miniature.

He approached, frozen with astonishment, and, bending, looked.

Astonishment gave place to fear, and as he recognized the small, girlish face he thrust his hand within his bosom, as if to feel for something.

The hand fell to his side, and, with a look of fear, he muttered:

"Come!"

"Know you that face?" came from the stern lips of the countess.

He could not deny it; something intangible, yet all-powerful, compelled him to speak the truth.

"Yes," he breathed, fearfully; "it is—"

"The woman—nay, the child—you ruined—deserted—murdered!" broke in the stern, stonelike voice of his confrontor. "The face of the poor, helpless ballet girl whom you left to die—the face of Ida Vitzarelli, the sister I have sworn to avenge!"

Hard, metallic, awful in its unchanging monotone, the voice spoke these words.

Their effect was still more awful.

The listener shrank, cowered, and at last fell speechless, breathless, huddled up, like a man stricken with palsy, in the large, luxurious chair.

Pitiless as the stone she resembled, the Italian approached and held out a long slip of paper.

His eyes stared at it unmeaningly, consciously.

"Look on this, murderer," she said, "and know thyself a still baser, viler reptile—a traitor. What other crimes these cowardly, fiendish hands have wrought Heaven alone may know, but this, their last, waits for punishment."

At the word he resumed something of his old tigerish courage, and, with a growl of fiendish rage, he sprang from his chair to clutch the convincing paper.

But before his trembling, claw-like fingers could grasp it the accuser stepped back, the door opened as noiselessly as before, and two dark, shadowy forms stood between him and her.

He turned and looked, his hair stood on end as his starting eyes confronted the hideous masks of craze and the flashing, murderous eyes that pierced them.

"Mercy!" he shrieked. "Mercy! Help!"

But the walls gave back the sound that could not pierce them.

He might shout with the noise of a thousand cannon, he might shriek with the agony of the lost, outpoured in one long yell, and the dreadful room would keep his despairing rage confined and unheard.

Oh, it was fearful! Never was death more hideous! Outside the footsteps of the passers by echo with irregular fitfulness. Outside, separated from him by a few bricks, are living men and women, who could save him if they could but hear.

But no, no, there was no help, and, maddened by the thought, he sprang upon the first masked face, and as he sprang received the glittering steel in his heart.

Once, twice, thrice the weapons pierced his quivering form, and then as he lay a mere lump of lifeless, bloodstained clay, curled by the last agony upon the gaudy carpet, the unseen, unknown avengers of treason departed and left the sound-tight room closed upon its awful occupant.

CHAPTER LXIX.

Short is the date in which ill acts prevail.

But honesty's a rock can never fail. Steele.

WITHIN a few hours Hugh Darrell and the constables had come up with their game and were knocking at the door of his retreat.

The hall porter, thinking the summons that of the secretary returned, hastened to unfasten the huge door, and started back with consternation on seeing three police officers and a gentleman, who without farther parley quietly stepped into the hall and demanded to see Captain Dartmouth.

"Captain Dartmouth!" repeated the flunkey, losing the little presence of mind he ever possessed.

"Yes, your master," sternly replied Hugh. "Come, sir, no hesitation. We have a warrant for his apprehension."

The inspector, as an addendum, produced the formidable document.

"Warrant! Bless me!" echoed the man. "Well, gentlemen, the captain is in his room—first door to your right. Here, James, show these gentlemen to the captain's room," and as Hugh, followed by the

officers, bounded up the stairs, he retreated to his sentry box, muttering:

"Warrant, eh? Well, I always thought the captain was no good by his looks. Where's my quarter's salary to come from if he's taken, I wonder?"

Hugh, following the no less startled footman, entered the unoccupied antechamber to the captain's private room and cast his stern eyes round the splendid apartment with one anxious glance.

"The villain," he murmured. "All this was purchased with the price of my poor father's blood."

So much intensified was his thirst for revenge that he turned with an impatient fierceness upon the unlucky footman, who was timidly knocking at a small green baize door that appeared to be let into the wall.

"Knock louder, sirrah, or break the door open."

Here the inspector stopped up, and, rapping at the door with his knuckles, with the metallic ring police officers seem to acquire with their staves and uniforms, exclaimed:

"Open, in the king's name."

No response came, and after a few moments of silent waiting the inspector called to his men and all of them put their backs to the door and endeavored to force it open.

Hugh meanwhile stood shivering by, and seeing the non success of their efforts he pushed them aside, and brought against the door such enormous strength that the hinges cracked and gave way.

The inspector and his men immediately dashed past and entered the room. Then they stopped suddenly and half stepped back.

"Great Heaven!" exclaimed the inspector, in a shocked tone. "We are too late."

"What," cried Hugh, "gone?" and with something like an imprecation he pushed them aside, but in his turn stopped and bent down over something beside which the inspector was already kneeling.

"Great Heaven!" he exclaimed, lifting his hat and passing his hand across his brow with a shudder of horror. "We are indeed too late. He is dead!"

"As a nail, sir," replied the officer, who had by this time regained his presence of mind and his usual business-like air.

"Look here, sir," he exclaimed, nodding to the dagger wounds, "one of these would have done it. But the party—or parties—for I think there must have been three in this—wanted to make sure and certain."

All this was said in a hurried whisper, and then he turned and said, aloud:

"Tompkins, and you, Mason, run down to the door and see that no one leaves the house. Mind you not a living soul whatever."

And he shook his finger to emphasize his command.

"And you, Simpson, run off to Bow Street and tell them to send the sergeant on."

The men rushed off to obey his directions, and the inspector proceeded to raise the dead body of his prisoner, now beyond all earthly justice.

Hugh, sick at heart—remember he had known no rest for two days and had besides spent the last in a tumult of passionate and inward agony—leant against the wall and looked on, for the moment too overwhelmed to speak.

A crowd of servants came fluttering in, some all trembling and crying, others simply curious, and most of them white-faced and terror-stricken.

"Where is the captain's man?" asked the inspector.

"Here, sir," replied the new valet, a young, timid-looking fellow.

"When did you see your master last?—But there, better not answer any questions. Just give me a hand to lift him on to the table. Come, pluck up a little courage, my man."

Between them they raised the lifeless form of the plottor and schemer on to the table.

Then Hugh came forward.

"Who—who saw this—this man last?" he asked, hoarsely.

"I did, sir," replied the footman.

And he detailed the circumstances of Reginald Dartmouth's return, and repeated his words of command.

Hugh winced as the man spoke of the secretary, but the inspector eagerly jumped at the name.

"Secretary! what is his name? Has he returned yet?" he asked, acutely.

"I can answer for that," replied Hugh, much to the inspector's surprise. "His name is Stanfield, and he has not and will not return."

"Where was he at the time of this murder—that is to say last night, sir?" asked the inspector, in a whisper.

Hugh answered promptly, but in as low a tone: "Your suspicions are wrong. He was at Dale last night and is there now."

At this moment a party of constables entered; the officer had met them on his way to Bow Street. Their head, with a business-like coolness, stationed his men about the house, and set others to lock up the rooms, while he himself prepared to

empty the pockets of the deceased and search the body.

Suddenly he uttered a low exclamation, and raised his sharp, hawk-like eyes upon Hugh.

"Did you know the deceased, sir?" he asked.

"Yes—that is no," said Hugh. "Why do you ask?"

The officer kept his hand upon the breast of the dead man, and glanced at it before answering, then, in a confidential whisper, he said:

"Did you happen to know, sir, if he was a member of any secret society—the Carbonari, for instance?"

Hugh nodded.

"I do know that he was," he said, gravely.

"Ah!" breathed the officer, in a tone of complete satisfaction. "Then the mystery is out, sir. Look here."

And he uncovered the breast and showed a deep cross cut in the flesh, evidently made with a long knife or dagger.

Hugh stared with horrified astonishment.

"You see, sir, that's their mark," whispered the detective. "That's their mark, sir. I have seen it before lots of times. This gentleman has been splitting, playing traitor, and this is their revenge. That's it you may rest easy. Mr. Watson—to the inspector from Dale—"you're got a warrant, I think. Well, he's dead, you see, and in our hands. Better go up to Bow Street with that gentleman and give your evidence."

And with the same business-like and professional coolness he released them out of the room, and remained to watch over the awful corpse stretched out upon the table.

Hugh, very sick at heart, and with the words "Vengeance is mine" ringing in his ears, accompanied the inspector to the office of police, and made his statement; then he was mad enough to think of taking horse and returning to Dale, but happily for his health Sir Charles arrived in time to prevent him.

Grace—thoughtful girl that she was—had suspected or feared some awful catastrophe, similar to that which had really occurred, and had despatched Sir Charles with her positive orders—not wishes, but orders—that her headstrong, impulsive lover should remain in London and take rest until she and Rebecca could arrive to join and take counsel with him.

So Hugh, who was pretty nearly exhausted, suffered himself to be led to Sir Charles's chambers, and there the good-natured baronet—who suppressed the horror he felt at the sudden and dreadful end of the man he had once called friend—got the owner of Dale to bed.

Right into the next day Hugh slept soundly and heavily, and when he did awake it was with fresh energy and renewed spirit.

The horrible events of the preceding nights seemed like a dream to him, and the first question he asked was how soon he could get back to Grace. Sir Charles said that he had sent a messenger down to Dale to tell the ladies that they, the two gentlemen, would return at once, as their services were of no farther use.

"How is that?" asked Hugh, with a sigh.

"Come in to breakfast, old fellow, and I'll tell you," said Sir Charles, and he led him by the arm into the cozy bachelor room where a well-spread breakfast-table awaited them.

Then, while Hugh sipped his coffee, Sir Charles gave him a brief outline of what the police had already discovered.

"It seems," he said, "that the unfortunate man brought his death upon himself. As you know already he belonged to one of the Italian secret societies. The chief of the brotherhood was a certain Count Vitzarelli; a niece of his, a beautiful woman and one of the chief corner stones of the Italian rebellion, was engaged to be married to Reginald Dartmouth. For some time past the rebellion has been losing ground, and the miserable man had determined to make a coup by turning traitor and disclosing the names of the members to the Italian Court."

Besides this he had managed by some infinite plotting to prevail upon the countess to go through a clandestine marriage, and the night of his death was the very night they had agreed upon for the flight. Meanwhile a certain valet of his, who bore him a grudge for a savage and coldblooded blow, got scent of his intended treachery and disclosed it to the brotherhood. You can guess the rest. They punish treason with death. It matters not how well the traitor may have guarded against discovery and detection, they dog him out and exact the fearful penalty; if he fly to the Arctic regions or bury himself in the sands of Africa they will have him. How they got him Heaven alone knows."

The porter owns that he fell asleep during the evening, and, if he did, of course the assassins made their way in at that moment. All this has come out from a paper found lying in the discharged valet's room, and is deduced from the cross cut upon the arm. There is no tracing the perpetrators of the

dead. The Vitarellis are of course long since out of reach even if suspicion could be directed against them. The old meeting-place of the brotherhood is silent and deserted; not a member can be traced, or if traced shown to be implicated in the murder. This is not the first case of the kind by very many, but in this and in all the former ones depend upon it the doers of the deed, the avengers of the order, will never be discovered. There, my dear fellow, is the whole of it. It was a fearful punishment, a shocking and sudden death; but I cannot forget that he merited bitter punishment and that his blood is, so to speak, upon his own hands."

Hugh sighed heavily.

"Come," said Sir Charles, "dispel this matter and turn to happier things. We will get down to the Dale at once and leave Reginald Dartmouth and all pertaining to him. Come, man, throw it off and look forward! If you can't forget that the pitiless villain was a relation, I, for my part, cannot help remembering that he—he—used foul play to the dear old squire and that he kept you out of your own for all these years. By Jove, the money he must have spent! After all it is a lucky thing for you, dear old boy, that he was not an idiot as well as a knave; he has invested some of the capital in such good things that Reeves tells me you will not be very much the loser by his term of occupation, and the Dale is of course wonderfully improved. Little did the villain think he was employing his talents for you!"

"Would to Heaven he had left them idle!" groaned Hugh.

By continually cheering and encouraging him Sir Charles succeeded in dispelling the cloud from his brow, and as they rode off to the two hearts who were beating in expectation of their arrival the baronet had the pleasure of seeing that Hugh's old manner had almost returned and that with every mile put between them and the dark shadow behind his spirit grew more cheerful.

How could they be otherwise? His love for Grace grew more intense each hour. And on her part the half-shamed and abashed love she had so strenuously striven to keep hidden from him in the old African days now became a passionate adoration, which the light of her dark, expressive eyes, as she glanced shyly at him, and the bright blush on her beautiful face, accompanied by her quick, disturbed breathing, when his footsteps sounded near her, fully proclaimed. Sir Charles and Rebecca, who had not experienced the trial and the sorrow of long waiting and inward, brooding disappointment, could scarcely understand the intensity of her and Hugh's passion for each other. What a glorious evening they had in the well-shrubbed walks and romantic arbours of the Warren it would be impossible to describe. Old times were gone over—new were planned out; they were to be happy for ever—the past was to be but as a dream. They lived, ate, drank, spoke, and thought of—love.

CHAPTER LXX.

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that has survived the fall.

Comper.

READER, we have journeyed long together, you have shown most gracious and noble patience; bear with us a little longer while we stand under the old elm that shades the still older church, and watch with smiling and approving eyes the procession of a double bridal party, and sniff the orange-blossom-scented air.

To-day all Hugh Darrell's travelling comes to an end; to-day Sir Charles turns over that charming new leaf of the chapter of goodly life. To-day two good and gentle women, true of heart, and brimming with love, sail into the haven of marriage, joy, and peace.

See them as they come up—gentle Rebecca leaning upon the arm of Mr. Reeves, and Grace, beautiful Grace, who is all that her name implies, in face and form, sheltering under the protecting wing of old Doctor Todley, who looks as paternally fond of her as any father possibly could.

And now once again the marriage bells peal out, rung by hands that ring them as if they mean to crack them; and still higher than their strain rises the loud, loving shout of the holiday folks who line the pathway and strain forward to watch the brides and bridegrooms, arm in arm, now leave the church and make for the carriages, which stand four and five deep in the avenue.

Well may the two brides blush and shed half-hidden tears of joy and gratitude as cheer upon cheer rings out. Well may the bridegrooms' lips tremble as they turn to breathe a heartfelt greeting to the simple, contented souls who have come to wish them good speed.

Many are happy to-day, and all owe their happiness in some way to their dearly beloved squire. None has been forgotten. The old are to be comfortably installed in their houses, the younger are to have higher wages, lighter hours, and such cot-

tages built for them that the plans and outlines alone have overwhelmed their simple hearts.

Mr. Willy and old Tovey are amongst the group, recounting over and over again the liberality of the wonderful bride and the nobleness of the handsome bridegroom.

The story of Grace's romantic adventures has got about in some way or other, but none can find it in their hearts to blame her or even call her wilful. The fine ladies are indeed all envious and wish her fortune had been theirs.

There is to be a dinner at the Warren to-night, a dinner beyond everything that even the school-master has ken of.

Oxen and sheep are to be roasted whole, ducks and geese are being plucked and trussed by the score, baskets of rare fruit are arriving at the large marquee each hour, and wine—wine, mark you, not beer only—is to be had ad libitum, and the more the merrier.

If making other people happy is the best way to be happy yourself, then Squire Hugh, as the tenants call him already, and Sir Charles, should be in the enjoyment of the most exalted felicity, for the air is thick with "Heaven bless them," and the toasts that are drunk on them would float them through the years of Methuselah.

There is to be a dinner, though they call it breakfast, at Mr. Reeves's, and the carriages are wending their way there along a road thickly strewn with flowers.

It is not to be a crowded party, but there are some of the best of the county, the *ordres de la cuisine* as Grace—*we beg pardon, Mrs. Darrell*—calls them, and the new quire is to be fêted with due state and solemnity.

The spacious dining-room is full as the two brides and bridegrooms enter, and those who have not had the pleasure of being present at the marriage ceremony look at them with eager curiosity, for this is a romantic double wedding, and the wedded are no ordinary people.

"So that is Hugh Darrell, is it?" whispered a young lady. "How handsome! What a distinguished air! Is it true that he has been all round the world and has a room full of Indian seals and tiger skins?"

"Now that's what I call a beautiful woman!" whispers a young lord, with more truth than good manners, alluding to Mrs. Darrell. "By Jove, a lucky fellow, Darrell! Beautiful, why, she is too beautiful! Such eyes, such hair, and see how she smiles!"

And the youthful peer feels so overcome by her charms that he is fain to drink a glass of champagne to keep himself up.

And now the eating and drinking are in full swing. Laughter ripples round the table with the melody of happy hearts.

Gentlemen, growing bolder, venture to address remarks to, ay, even to chat with the beautiful Grace, and the young swell begged—with as much earnestness as if he were asking for his life—for a sprig of her orange blossom.

She gave it, with a beautiful blush and an upward glance full of loving coquetry at her newly made husband, that brought the hot blood to his face.

But some speechifying is to be made.

The lord of the county rose with a gracious, even benevolent smile, and requested all to charge their glasses.

Then he commenced a long speech.

He could not say too much for the ladies, the brides, their beauty, their amiability, their angelic qualities in general.

He could scarcely say too much for the bridegrooms.

He dwelt upon Sir Charles's character—his last one fortunately—until the cheering was wonderful. Then he handled Hugh with the air of an artist.

His words were happily chosen, with frequent parentheses of "wonderful adventures," "noble courage," "princely magnanimity," "pattera land-lord," etc., and his encomiums called forth such tremendous cheering and other demonstrations of delight that the glasses on the table jumped and leaped like sportive lambs, and the footmen danced about with frantic endeavours to remain careless spectators and refrain from joining in the cheering.

Hugh was rather pale with emotion, Grace was very so, and her beautiful eyes were filled with grateful happy tears.

She looked over at Rebecca and thence to Mrs. Lucas—both were weeping; and Mr. Reeves, who should be above that sort of thing, was blowing his nose to hide the tear drops that were trickling down his cheeks.

Sir Charles, when the cheering was somewhat subsided, rose and spoke again. He was no speechmaker he said, but he made them a very eloquent little speech—and very hot, flushed, and happy—resumed his seat.

Then all eyes were turned to Hugh—Hugh, the brave, the strong, and the true.

Grace, timid perhaps for the first time in her life, glanced up at his set face and pressed his arm. He rose.

"Friends," he said, "Sir Charles tells you he is a man of few words and yet makes a speech equal to a member of parliament. I tell you I am a man of no words and that if I tried from now till doomsday I could not express one tithe, one shadow of the emotions with which my heart now throbs. Thank you, thank you, one and all—and may Heaven be as bountiful to you each as it has been to me!"

And with a glance full of loving pride at the beautiful bride by his side he resumed his seat.

The cheering was deafening, the glasses clattered again with renewed activity.

My lords and ladies applauded as if they were plain masters and mistresses, and when they would have left off, or whether they would have closed at all of their own free will, must remain a mystery, for suddenly the enthusiasm was rendered dumb by the appearance of a gentleman who with a very red face pushed his way past the footmen at the door and hurrying up to the table grasped Hugh's hand.

Before the assembly could ask who the old gentleman in the knee breeches and farmer's cords was an exclamation burst from Grace, who cried, with a burst of joyful surprise:

"Mr. Stewart!"

Mr. Stewart it was, and in a state of excitement, and notwithstanding his burnt-up station, evidently prospering. Still wringing his old friend's hand, he turned to the guests and in a voice trembling with emotion commenced an account of Hugh's bravery at the station and his heroism on the homeward voyage, but was overborne by his own emotion and by the universal cheering that he allowed himself to be pushed into a chair by Hugh, and contented himself with shaking hands with everybody near him and telling them that he had come post-haste from Liverpool to be there in time to see his brave Hugh and the still braver Grace married.

And now they are gone.

But they are gone for a little while only; the Warren is too dear to Sir Charles and Lady Anderson, the Dale is too precious to the new squire and his beautiful bride to be left lonely for long.

They look forward to a speedy return and long and happy lives.

Warren and Dale are knit in closer bonds now even than of yore—knit with the bonds of brotherly and sisterly love, with the happy harmony in years to come of children's voices, children's laughter—still farther on, perchance, youth's and maiden's love may join the two homes in one.

Is it fair to peep into the carriages that bear the happy couples to their honeymoon? Well no, but we cannot resist taking a peep at Hugh and Grace.

He is leaning back amongst the white satin cushions with all his old easy, graceful air; but a new light lies in his eyes and it shines down upon the beautiful face that lies upon his breast.

His lips are trembling with unspeakable words of rapturous love; his hands, clasping the lithe, supple form nestling to his heart, are trembling with eager and passionate delight; but as her eloquent, love-thrilling eyes are raised and tremble beneath the passionate fire of his he can say nothing, do nothing but clasp her still closer and watch her eyelids close with excess of love and joy, kiss them and the sweet lips beneath.

If Hugh Darrell has had cause in the past to regret his troubles and trials he has only one feeling now, and that is an overbrimming one of gratitude for this last turn of *PICKLES FORTUNE*.

THE END.

MARRIED IN MASK.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ONCE in the far past the father of that family had been a drunkard. At night when he returned from work the furies had the entire away in his humble home. Blows, curses, and blood had signalized his advent.

All was changed now. The father was one of the most efficient members of the police force. He was more than a policeman. He was an officer of police, and year by year was gaining higher rank.

Once he had been a demon under the influence of liquor. Now he was an honour and comfort to the family gathered about that table.

The mother, with gray hairs thick above her brow, greeted his coming now with joy. It was the happiest time of the week the nights that the police officer could throw off his uniform and join the family circle in private clothes. He was full of cheer, full of fun, full of robust jest. He was proud of his family, and they returned the compliment.

Who had wrought this wonderful transformation? Who had elevated the brawler of the shanty to the responsible position of sergeant of police? Who had changed the demon into the loving father?

No clergyman or priest had been the agent of this wonderful reformation. The great motive power was a woman. She had done what she could. All was bright and beautiful where she had passed. Her memory was dearer to this Irish family than that of any being on earth or of any mortal gone to eternity. Her name was ever mentioned in the morning and evening prayers. The gray-haired mother of this family wept when Bessie Truelove was forced to take her invalid husband to foreign lands. How they all longed for the day when "The Good Woman" would return with the restored man so pale and weak when the ship sailed.

How amazed would the mother of this happy family have been could she have known what was in the pocket of her son this night. It was a simple record made by a dying man, and yet she could have informed her son of the wondrous value of that record and recalled to him the story she had told him years ago. She would have ransacked every corner of the metropolis to find some one who could tell her how a letter would reach Mr. Truelove and his wife.

But the folded fragment of paper, the precious record of Bessie's parentage, remained safe and forgotten in a pocket of his vest seldom used. The memory of the paper passed from him.

In a few days the vest was consigned to a chest in which were deposited articles of clothing to be used in future. The vest came no more out to the light of day. It was only dimly remembered, that vest which had done so much service. There it reposed month after month and became only one of the possibilities of the future. How many cast-off articles of dress are laid away as possibilities of the future.

Day after day and year after year this excellent family went through their routine of duties.

The fragment of paper was forgotten by the owner of the vest. How would the mother of that clerk have started could she have known that in that chest her son had hidden inadvertently that which would have filled the heart of the "Good Woman," her angel, with joy. But the son had forgotten the story of the past, and there for weeks, months and years lay hidden the clue to a mother's darling.

Such is fate or such is the will of an inscrutable Deity. The message from the dying detective had found permanent lodging in a chest.

After the release of Sam from prison the life of Nicholas Rudd seemed to flow on peacefully for several years.

He was surrounded by an affectionate family, of which the Italian had become a permanent member.

His son gradually took the management of the business, banking and mercantile, into his own hands. He manifested the same wonderful business tact and rapid judgment which had made the elder Rudd famous. The senior partner leaned on him as years slowly undermined his own ambition and energy.

He loved now to spend many hours in his library in converse with his accomplished brother-in-law upon scientific matters and literary culture. He manifested, moreover, an eager desire to glean, item by item, the history of his deserted wife before her sad death. The worm, remorse, preyed ever upon his heart.

The Italian detected the inward pain and sought by every device to soothe it. There had come also into that mansion an auxiliary to the soothing efforts of the doctor. It was Bessie, the wife.

Gradually the heart so long cold in Rudd opened to her. The tendrils reached forth to her at last and the old man trusted and loved woman once more. The young wife was a mother now. The beautiful girl who was born from that marriage of true lovers was named Bessie. Sam would hear of no other name for his child than the one which had been so dear to him in his early years. The child was a natural climber, and so she soon climbed into the heart of Nicholas Rudd and took up permanent quarters there.

The Italian was delighted at this manifestation of tenderness on the part of his brother-in-law. He saw that it would smoothe and make bright the path of the aged banker to the grave. There were hours of mortal agony when Rudd brooded over the fearful mistake of his life. Then he would exclude himself from his family, and no one could gain admittance to him but his son. For days he would live alone in his apartments, so bitter and sullen was his remorse. But he never could refuse Sam admittance. He saw in him the image of the wife he had misjudged. His heart yearned toward her child so mysteriously sent to him by fate.

But the junior partner respected in Rudd the sorrow which he was too wise to attempt to fathom. He had only been informed that his mother was of noble Italian blood and had died in his infancy. He knew that the Italian doctor was his uncle, and had made

his mark in the politics of his native land. But the reasons that had induced his father to leave Venice were carefully withheld from him by both father and uncle. He knew from their occasional discourse in his presence that his father had been sailor, soldier and merchant, in early life; that his career had been eventful before he finally grasped the thread of moneyed success which had led him on to the mastery of millions.

In these days of depression and seclusion, when Nicholas Rudd withdrew into his sanctum, Sam never intruded except upon pressing matters of business. He obtained the requisite authority or advice and immediately left the room.

But these were only the shadows of the banker's declining years. He would emerge from them and his primitive buoyancy returned to him. He was a considerate father and a courteous host. When the inevitable remorse came upon him he took care that his gloomy presence should not mar the happiness of others' lives. He vanished until it was over.

And so the little, prattling child which grew up beside him saw nothing to check her young affection for him. She was ever ready for his kiss and caress. She wondered when the silken-haired old man vanished for days. But they told her "grandpapa" would soon be well again, and she watched anxiously for his reappearance. She it was who first broke the prejudice of years. Her little portrait was the first female face which was allowed to adorn the parlour walls of the mansion.

The ice being thus broken it was not difficult for Sam to secure a year after a place in the house for the portrait of his wife. Thus two of the great schemes sex gained, step by step, recognition in the grand mansion.

But Doctor Ruffin, for by this name did he desire to be known in the metropolis, had never, with all his acute penetration, been able to fathom the mystery of the locked chamber on the floor where he held sway. He had observed that occasionally, in the midst of Nicholas Rudd's fits of melancholy, he would steal away to this chamber and lock himself in for hours. No person in the house had ever seen the inside of this chamber. The key was with the aged banker always.

The young wife had stated to Ruffin that, although she had little curiosity, she had lain awake at night speculating upon the probable appearance of the inside of the secret room. The physician had laughed at her and assured her she was the most inquisitive woman on the globe. But whether this charge was true or not neither Bessie nor any inmate of that house dared to interrogate Nicholas Rudd regarding it. It had been attempted, but such a freezing look came in response that all listeners were appalled. They felt that if any one trifled with the aged man, regarding this private affair, the trifle would soon pass the street door never to return. The banker was feeble and old, but a fearful will and dignity made him respected in his peculiarities.

"Don't cross him," said the warning voice of Ruffin. "I have seen him angered in Italy. He is a courteous gentleman but a demon when people are obtrusive and persecute him."

But as the years passed by, and the little child, Bessie, became a prattler and a runner through the house, it chanced that in the course of her juvenile explorations she discovered that there was a room which was always locked.

She informed her mother of the discovery, and moreover asserted that she had pushed a penny under the door of the apartment and could not recover it unless the door was opened. Here was an impending calamity.

The possibility of little Bessie not mentioning her loss to her grandfather was so remote that no one in the house built upon it. How would the old banker silence the importunities of the child to have the door opened?

The question was mooted from kitchen to attic. It was evident that a crisis had arrived in the history of the household.

What was the amazement of wife and servant to hear Bessie, in spite of all threatenings which they had given her, open the subject of the secret chamber to her grandfather one evening.

She detailed to him the particulars regarding the loss of the penny and the statement of the servants also that the chamber door was never unlocked. The child seated in his lap expatiated upon the peculiar hardships of the case, and ended with the assertion that she was firmly convinced that her grandfather would do all that was right in the premises.

To this appeal the young wife listened in silence and with head bowed down over some embroidery she was working.

The grandfather glanced quickly at the mother, but he saw that if she possessed the painful gift of curiosity she balanced the weakness by admirable powers of concealing it.

The young mother worked on as if embroidery was the highest good in life.

"Bessie," said Nicholas Rudd, addressing the mother, "do you hear this child's request?"

"Yes," she said, still keeping her eyes fixed upon her work.

"And do you think I ought to open that door for her?"

"It is your house," was the response. "You can do what you like here."

No calmer tones ever came from woman. No attention to embroidery was ever more assiduous.

"Admirable woman!" he said, regarding her.

"And have you no curiosity in regard to the opening of the only room that is secret in this house?"

"I have no inordinate curiosity regarding anything that does not concern me," she said, with a smile and looking up at him.

"And would you be content to sit here and allow me and this child to enter that room and never hear from either of us what we saw in it?"

The little girl was now all attention; she sat still and listened, but her eyes dilated. The mere matter of the lost penny had shrivelled in its proportions. There was something in that room unusual—something beyond the importance of a penny; and so she listened eagerly for her mother's response.

"I have no objection to Bessie entering that room with you, father," she said. "And if you wish her to remain silent regarding what she sees there, extort a promise from her, and all the world cannot make her open her lips."

The mother's attention to her embroidery was now masterly. It seemed questionable if the keys even of Bluebeard's mysterious room could at this moment divert her gaze from the mesh her needle and silk were weaving.

The aged banker smiled a little as he contemplated her; then he said:

"Can you and this little child keep a secret?"

The needle never ceased its industrious play, nor did the young wife's eyes for an instant leave the embroidery, as she said:

"You know that I kept Sam's secret of the shanty for many years. That was a pretty good test of my powers in that direction, I should say. As for my child, I can state that she has inherited the gift of silence, particularly when she has given her word."

"I would be pleased, to-day," he said, after a thoughtful silence of a moment, "to exhibit to you and Bessie this room, so long sealed against all eyes but mine. Promise me that you will not mention to a human being what you see there to-day, for as long a period as you kept Sam's secret, and I will conduct you both there on the instant."

There was a limit, then, to the absorbing interest in the intricacies of embroidery.

The young mother stuck her needle in the cloth to preserve it for future use, and signified that she would consent to view the mysterious chamber upon the conditions he had proposed.

Then the proposition was defined more accurately for little Bessie's comprehension.

"Not even tell papa?" she said.

"Tell no one," said her mother, earnestly.

Attention being once diverted from needlework, it is amazing with what concentration the female mind turns to a new subject.

Young Mrs. Rudd having consented to sacrifice embroidery for the pursuit of knowledge in the upper storey of the house, quickly impressed upon her child the importance of accepting the confidence her grandfather proposed to admit her to.

Little Bessie gave her promise then with wonderful solemnity of manner.

"You may retire now," said the aged master of the house to the servant, who still lurked near with open ears.

The man had served Mr. Rudd for many years, and he could scarcely realize that a secret which had been withheld from him after so long and faithful service was actually to be entrusted to a prattling child.

But so it was, and the discomfited servant withdrew into the servants' hall, with a firm conviction that he would be able to make the steward and his subordinates open their mouths.

In the meantime the master of the house took from a sideboard a lamp, small, but made of solid silver. He lighted it, and then bade mother and child follow him.

He ascended slowly to the storey occupied by Doctor Ruffin.

The mother and child who followed saw that his look was weary, as if he was unhappy. He uttered no word, and a sense of awe stole over his companions.

The floor occupied by the Italian doctor was deserted. The physician had gone out on business to the city.

When the aged Rudd had reached the door of the

mysterious chamber he paused and turned to his companions.

"No human being has entered this room for many, many years, except myself. I admit you and Bessie because after many years of suspicion and aversion to your sex I have learned again to trust. You have both promised to reveal to no mortal the secrets of this chamber, so long devoted to the hidden agonies of a broken heart. The intensity of despair which this room has witnessed no tongue can express. It is now sacred only to remorse. When I am dead, and laid in my grave, you may and must publish to the world what I shall exhibit to you within. Tell men the history of an aged man whom adverse circumstances drove from his natural channel and noblest inclinations into pursuits which ruined the most exquisitely beautiful born in him. Tell men, through this secret chamber of mine, never to thwart, cripple, or impede any sprout of real beauty which shoots up in the human heart. Each man and each woman has been fashioned for a peculiar destiny.

"He, the all-wise Creator, knows best why He has given to this and to that being certain peculiarities of taste and temperament and talent. He intends all His flowers to grow. He has use in His economy of life for all that He plants. He moulded the lily no less than the oak. Shall man say the oak is useful and the lily trash? Bessie, speak for the old man, the wealthy banker, when he is dead and gone and the willows nod over him. Tell men what he would have been to his native land had they not hedged him in with their false philosophies of life and their cruel coldness. Tell them that, by their utilitarian phrases, and their want of sympathy and appreciation, they are daily blighting wreaths of glory for their native land which would make that land immortal in history, as the realm of beauty. Tell them of this poor old man who wasted a life in gathering gold to dazzle them when something grander and more potent slumbered in him—that hunger and want of sympathy drove him into the career where naught is reaped but the gold that perishes."

There was a strange light in the eyes of the venerable man as he concluded.

He took from his bosom a heavy key and applied it to the lock. He pushed open the door and led little Bessie in by the hand. When the mother followed he closed and locked the door behind him. Had it not been for the little lamp they had been in total darkness. Gradually, however, lights sprang up on every hand at the touch of his lamp. Soon the whole place was brilliantly illuminated.

The child spoke aloud in her ecstasy, but the young mother, with clasped hands, looked about her in bewilderment. She, with her mature powers and her cultivated mind, saw at a glance that coldness and neglect had robbed England of the greatest ornament that makes a nation immortal through all ages.

She kept the old man's secret until the years of her promise should be fulfilled. When those years are fulfilled we too shall speak again. Until that hour let the old man rest in peace.

To his countrymen Nicholas Rudd shall rise again as surely as the sun which now dips behind the Western horizon. Suffice it to say that this secret chamber was the private studio of Nicholas Rudd. It was full of Italian scenes painted by him in early manhood, and pictures of the sea which had been rejected by the unappreciative public in his days of poverty. But the touch of the master was in them all, and when a certain time has elapsed they will be given to the world.

CHAPTER XXXII.

NICHOLAS RUDD was sitting in his library one evening in the fall of the year. The gas was lighted and the fire in the grate burned cheerfully.

Little Bessie was seated in his lap, and listening with rapt attention to one of the children's stories which he always related with peculiar fascination of tone and manner.

Grandfather and grandchild were a picture as the servant entered and handed a letter to the banker. The envelope bore a foreign postmark. It had just arrived, too, by the regular steamer.

The banker bade the child be patient until he had made himself acquainted with the contents of the letter.

He recognized the chirography at once, although it was several years since he had looked upon that delicate handwriting. He was amazed because the writer and himself, although friendly, had been separated by family controversies for long, long years. He saw by the mourning note paper that a calamity had occurred. The veil of eternity had been flung aside for a new comer.

He started when he saw who had gone to his last account before the Judge of the living and the dead.

The dead man and himself had been at enmity for at least forty years.

Here, then, was his enemy gone at last. The man who had separated him from the writer of the letter so long could speak ill of him no more.

He felt on the instant a weakening of old hostility. There was no longer cause for rancour.

It was something of a shock to his nerves also, and plunged him into sad reflection. The dead man was his compeer and had started in the race of life with him. If this man could die so could the wealthy Rudd.

"I had better forgive him now that he is gone," he thought to himself. "My summons may come any day now."

But there were other reflections suggested by the letter as the old man read on. There was a new warmth to be shed over his declining years. These words convinced him of the fact:

"And now, dear Nicholas, that my husband has gone, there must and will be perfect accord and intercourse between us. I yearn for the restoration of our early intimacy. I need not assure you as to what has been the state of my heart all these weary years. You know it and all the convictions of duty which have influenced my actions."

"Henceforth there will be peace, sweet peace. Come then to me after my arrival, with that perfect trust and affection of the olden time. Neither of us can hope to live many years. We must both soon go to the mansions prepared for us by our Heavenly Father. My heart yearns toward you with tenfold tenderness now that all the rest of our family sleep the last sleep. Let us two go down to the grave hand in hand, encouraging each other in those works of charity which we know are pleasing to Heaven."

"I have always taken a sister's pride in your wonderful success and the great abilities which have made you conspicuous among men. Our family always underrated you when you were a boy. You will remember that I stood up for you in childhood, and when you landed here again to renew the life battle on your native shores."

"I predicted honour and success for you, impetuous and proud as you were. I know your sensitiveness to reproach and sneers. Why should I not? I was born with similar delicacy of feeling. But no matter now. I have not to plead my case with you. You have always understood and appreciated my position. Now we can be together again, and I know that our journey will be sweet. I have heard, in the mysterious way in which intelligence reaches far-off lands, that you have companions now in your lonely house. I rejoice at it. They tell me that you have adopted for your son and partner a noble young man, who has grown up with you in business, and that in his hands the reputation and success of your great house are safe. You will have then all the more leisure and inclination to aid me in certain charitable institutions which I propose, with Heaven's help, to found before my death. I desire from you no pecuniary aid. My husband, by certain fortunate investments in real estate, had accumulated a large property, and by his will has left it all to me. But I want your advice in the details of my business."

"I hear too, in this far-off land, where my Saviour awoke from death and my husband now sleeps in the hope of a similar resurrection, that your adopted son has taken a wife, who is a comfort to you as well as a joy to him. Shall I not, coming back to your arms, find a place too in each of their hearts? Tell them that I shall love them for your sake. I am very weary and very lonely now. I hunger for your society, and for words of affection and kind smiles. I am coming back to you to find them."

"I have written to my agent to refurnish my old home, and have everything in readiness for me, servants and all, upon my arrival. You will not have an opportunity to help me in this domestic arrangement. I shall notify you, soon after my arrival, of the time I expect you to come to my house and introduce to me your son and his wife. I expect now to be able to reach London in December. May Heaven bring us together in safety soon."

"YOUR WIDOWED SISTER."

The letter fell into little Bessie's lap. The child had been looking up impatiently and wondering what there could be in a letter to interest her grandfather so long. When she saw that the epistle was abandoned she said:

"Is that a love letter?"

"No, you little minx. What do you know about love letters?"

"William got a love letter from his sweetheart, so the steward says."

"This is a letter from my sister," he said.

"Mamma said you didn't have any sister."

"Mamma thought so, Bessie, because I never told her. This is my sister who has been in the Holy Land several years. I shall introduce your mother to her when she comes to this country. I will take you too. She loves little children, and she will take a great fancy to you, I am sure."

"I will go and tell mamma," she said, sliding off from his lap and making her exit.

"What a strange old man!" exclaimed the young mother, soon after to her husband. "He never reveals anything regarding his relatives, and the first thing one hears of them they are at your very door. If Bessie had not happened to be sitting in his lap when the letter came I suppose we should never have heard of this sister until we were brought face to face with her. I wonder what she is like? I have a great mind to ask the sphinx."

"Inasmuch as you told him you had no curiosity I should advise you to try the experiment," said Sam.

"I said I had no curiosity in matters that did not concern me. This sister I must visit, so it's natural enough to desire to know how she looks, what she likes and what she doesn't like. I might run counter to her prejudices at the first call, so I would like to be familiar with her peculiarities."

Sam laughed his quiet laugh before he said:

"Put Bessie on the search for her peculiarities. She will pump them out of my father quicker than any one I know."

(To be continued.)

THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT.

CHAPTER XXI.

"Is Mr. Falkenstein at home?"

This question was asked in an agitated voice by a singularly beautiful but wild-looking young woman, respectfully dressed, who had rung at the door of the machinist's residence.

The servant, after a little hesitation, showed the girl into the parlour, and told her to sit down. She remained, however, standing until Mr. Falkenstein came in.

He too invited her to be seated, but she declined. "I bring you a message from a friend of mine," the girl said, "who has something important to communicate to you."

"I am very busy, but he can call and see me," said Mr. Falkenstein, eyeing her closely.

"He cannot call, sir; he is ill—dying," and the tears came into her eyes.

"Where is this gentleman?"

"He is not a gentleman—he is a thief; and he cannot come to see you, for he is lying in prison."

Mr. Falkenstein was very much startled, of course, at this announcement. The girl's manner was wild, and his sharp look showed her that he suspected that she was not in her right mind.

"Oh, sir!" said she, "I am not mad, though half dead with grief. I love this man. Ah! if you led the life I lead you would know how a woman clings to the only man who has been kind to her. And when I tell you that a dying man says it will lift a weight from his heart to speak with you I know you will not deny him. Do not be afraid—there is no snare laid to trap you. It is broad daylight. Only promise that you will go directly to the prison and I will relieve you of my presence."

It was Mabel who was pleading thus for a fallen associate.

After some hesitation Mr. Falkenstein consented to visit the prisoner.

The girl vanished as soon as she had gained his consent, and he saw no more of her till he found her standing in front of the prison. She nodded to him, and then went away, drawing her veil over her face to hide her tears.

After some formalities were gone through with Mr. Falkenstein found himself in the cell of Walter Ransom. Wounded in a night-skirmish, he had been arrested, identified, and was about to be sent back to his old quarters, when he failed so rapidly that he was allowed to remain where he was.

"Mr. Falkenstein," said the felon, speaking with difficulty, "I sent for you to make a confession and restitution. I have had queer thoughts since I've been in this place, and since I know I've got my ticket for the next world. I was a happier man when I was earning an honest livelihood in your shop than I have ever been since. But I was tempted, and I fell. It was I who robbed your safe. I had an accomplice, but a fearful oath I dare not break forbids me to reveal his name. A memorandum-book, dropped in the office by Hermann Steinberg, made me think that you would suspect him. But as we heard that he was at liberty we concluded that you knew his honesty too well to doubt him."

"I did suspect him, though I did not prosecute him," said Falkenstein.

"He had no hand in it," said the dying thief. "My comrade was a professional burglar. Here is my share of the plunder—a hundred pounds."

He handed a package to the German.

"Count it, please," he added.

To satisfy the prisoner Mr. Falkenstein did so, and found the amount correct.

"Now, Mr. Falkenstein," said the thief, "if you can forgive I shall be easier."

"I do forgive you," said Mr. Falkenstein; "and may your repentance be acceptable in the eyes of Heaven."

"If I dared I would say Heaven bless you, sir!" said Ransom, as he pressed his visitor's hand.

Mr. Falkenstein hurried home, with a load lifted from his heart. The first thing he did when he got home was to sit down to his writing-desk and pen a note, which he immediately afterward despatched to Steinberg's house. The note was addressed to Hermann Steinberg, and said:

"MY DEAR MR. HERMANN STEINBERG.—It is with feelings of mingled joy and humiliation that I address you. I have just learned from the confession of one of the burglars who robbed my safe that you were innocent of that crime. How could I have trusted even the strongest circumstantial evidence when weighed against your honourable antecedents and your earnest disavowals? But the best of men are liable to error, and I wronged you cruelly. Convinced of your guilt myself I convinced my daughter of it. I shall immediately tell her the joyful news. Humbly I entreat your pardon for my convictions, throwing myself on your generosity and charity. I should have rushed to find you, but I could not look upon your honest face—I preferred to write. Come to us at once. Our house and hearts are open to you. Come and relieve the anxiety of

"Your true and faithful friend

"MAURICE FALKENSTEIN."

Having despatched this note Mr. Falkenstein hurried with his good news to his daughter's room. In a few words he conveyed the welcome intelligence.

It is said that joy is more dangerous than grief, and in this case Flora was at first almost prostrated by the shock.

When she recovered she threw her arms about her father's neck, and blushing and weeping said:

"Oh, father, this has saved my life. I was dying of grief—for—in spite of his supposed guilt—I dearly loved this man! And to think how I treated him! To think how I turned a deaf ear to his pleadings—would not listen to one word—denied him the common felon's privilege of pleading not guilty."

"It was I who was to blame," said Falkenstein. "It was I who prejudiced his case, and prejudiced your mind against him. But our reception of him shall atone for our cruelty."

"When do you think we shall receive an answer to your note?"

"His answer will be himself, I am certain," said Mr. Falkenstein. "I have sent a special messenger with the note, and if Hermann is at home when he arrives we may expect him every moment. Let us go down to the sitting-room and be ready to receive him."

Hermann happened to be sitting with Claudine when the letter was handed him.

He read it silently, and had he obeyed his first impulses he would have answered it in person. But he thought it his duty to ask the opinion of Claudine.

He gave her the note.

Her hand shook as she held the paper and perused its contents. A deadly fear possessed her soul. It seemed as if the cup of triumph were about to be snatched from her lips. She feared that if he once met the Falkensteins he would return to his old love.

"What do you propose to do?" she asked, as she gave back the letter.

"What would you do if you were in my place?" Claudine's eyes blazed with fiery indignation.

"If I were a man and in your position I would pay back scorn with scorn. I should reject the proffered hand of Falkenstein as he rejected yours. The hour of your revenge has come. Employ it. That is my counsel."

"You are right," replied Hermann, fired by her words. "The messenger is waiting for an answer. He shall have it."

He drew his chair to the writing-desk, and with a feverish hand penned the following:

"TO MAURICE FALKENSTEIN, Esq.—Sir,—Your note is received. You have done me tardy justice after basely wronging me. I shall keep your letter, for I cannot trust you. But for the knowledge that this proof of my innocence is in my hands you might at some future time renew your accusation. I will receive no farther communication from you. As for your invitation to renew our intercourse, coming from you, it is an insult.

"HERMANN STEINBERG."

"I am proud of you, my Hermann," said Claudine, after reading this reply.

Hermann sealed the note and gave it into the

hands of Mr. Falkenstein's messenger himself. Five minutes afterward it was delivered.

Falkenstein read it and crushed it in his hand. Then turning to his daughter he said, sternly:

"Flora, forget that you have ever known this man. He is unworthy of a thought. He rejects our friendship, and in terms of scorn. Between us and him there is a gulf impassable."

"Will you—not—let me—read my death-warrant?" faltered Flora, pointing to the letter.

"Yes," said her father, handing her the note. "It will rouse your pride and aid you to forget this most unhappy dream."

Flora took the scrap of paper, pressed her white lips to her father's forehead, and retired to her chamber. There she read the cruel lines, and then followed a bitter struggle with her hopeless agony.

When she was a little calmer she bathed her face in cold water, sat down by the window and gazed vacantly into the street.

But her cup was not yet full. Determined to widen the breach between Hermann and the Falkensteins, Claudine persuaded her lover to take a walk with her, and she purposely led him through the street in which the Falkensteins lived.

Slowly they passed on the opposite side, the girl hanging on his arm and gazing up into his face with an expression of almost unmanly tenderness.

A white face looked down on the couple from the chamber-window opposite.

Hermann caught one glimpse of it—and it was a face of such utter woe and despair that it wrung his heart.

Claudine too beheld her rival, and a fierce glow of triumph lighted up her handsome features.

Hermann never forgot the look of either woman. But the white face disappeared, and the fierce smile faded from the lips of Claudine Duval.

CHAPTER XXII.

ONE day, some time after this incident, Hermann Steinberg was seated smoking in a pleasure garden, one of his favourite resorts.

At a long table near him was a crowd of men and women listening eagerly to a man plainly dressed, who seemed to have the talk entirely to himself.

At first Hermann paid little attention to this party, being occupied by his own thoughts.

A word or two however excited his curiosity, and he looked attentively at the speaker.

He was a young man, almost as young as himself, with a fresh-coloured face, dark eyes, and a delicate silky moustache, but strange to say his hair was perfectly snow-white.

After a while the group that had been listening to the white-haired young man dispersed, leaving him sitting alone.

Hermann joined him and said, civilly: "I hope you will pardon my curiosity, sir, but I thought I overheard you saying: that you had been wrecked."

"You were not mistaken," said the stranger. "I am the sole survivor of a shipwreck by which a hundred souls perished. When a man has been through such an experience as that it is no wonder that he has such a head of hair as I've got."

And he passed his hand through his snow-white locks.

"In what vessel were you wrecked?" asked Hermann.

"In the 'Snow Cloud.'"

Hermann started at the name.

"I see you have heard about that disaster?" asked the man.

"Certainly," answered Hermann.

"It was I who carried the heavy news to Germany. My name is Hans Spellman. The horror of that tragedy bleached my hair in a single night."

"It was sad news to our family," said Hermann, with a sigh.

"How? Had you friends on board?"

"Two little cousins—a girl and boy of eight and twelve years of age."

"Alone?" asked Spellman.

"No, they were travelling in charge of a man from Mainz."

"I know such a party well," said Hans Spellman.

"Then you will recognize their faces readily," said Hermann, and he took from his pocket-book two photographs—one that of the supposed Carl Wolff, the other of Caspar and Minna taken on the same card.

Hans Spellman gazed at the pictures, but shook his head as he returned them.

"No such man—no such children were on board," he said.

"Are you certain?" asked Hermann, astounded at this information.

"Certain, sir. The man and the children I refer to were Oscar Bachman, a farmer from the Black Forest, and Louis and Ida Bachman, his son and daughter."

Hermann gazed at the man in blank dismay. What mystery was this?

Suddenly a smile of intelligence lighted up the face of the wrecked traveller.

"What were the names of the man and children you were interested in?" he asked.

"The man's name was Carl Wolff, and the children's names were Caspar and Minna Hartmann."

"I remember the names now perfectly. I had a newspaper printed on the day we sailed, and I remember expressing my surprise to Mr. Bachman that his name did not appear in the passenger list, though the correct number of passengers was given. Then he explained that just on the eve of departure, when he had given up all hopes of getting births on board, a man who had two children in his charge sold him his tickets. I haven't thought of the circumstance till now, for you may well suppose that the tragedy of the wreck drove all minor matters out of my head. But now you mention the name of Carl Wolff I remember all about it. That was the name that figured on the passenger list—Carl Wolff, with two children, Caspar and Minna Hartmann. They were not on board the 'Snow Cloud.' But you do not seem to be rejoiced at the fact."

"Because," said Hermann, "they are still missing. From the date of the sailing of the 'Snow Cloud' to this nothing has been heard of them in Germany or in England."

"Then you suspect—"

"What can I suspect but foul play?" said Hermann, lowering his voice. "Did Bachman tell you nothing more? Did Wolff tell him nothing more? Hansack your memory, I conjure you. The father and mother of these children are living. They have tasted the bitterness of death in learning the supposed fate of their darling. If they are alive, and can be recovered, they will be the happiest people on earth. If the boy and girl have been victims of villainy it will be a duty to pursue the author of the crime to the bitter end."

Hans Spellman motioned young Steinberg to be silent, and then, leaning his head on his hands, seemed plunged in a profound reverie.

After a few minutes he looked up and shook his head.

"I have a vague impression," he said, "that poor Bachman told me something more—but what it was has escaped me. My memory was never very good and it has been quite treacherous since that shipwreck."

"Did you keep no journal—no diary? Most travellers do so to kill time on a sea-voyage."

"I did keep a memorandum-book," said Spellman.

"Where is it?"

"I believe I was born to ill luck," answered Spellman. "I was wrecked on my first voyage, and on my second my chest was left behind at Bremen. I came over with only my carpet-bag."

"And do you think if your fellow traveller had told you anything more than what you have imparted to me you would have entered it in your journal?"

"Yes, I think I should. I took quite an interest in him and his poor little ones; and, as you say, having plenty of time on my hands, and being so forgetful, I most likely made a note of his conversation."

"And that record is now lost?"

"Oh, no! I hope not. A friend of mine in Bremen promised to look after my chest and forward it by the next ship."

"Will you let me know when it arrives?"

"With pleasure."

He gave Hermann his address, young Steinberg handed him his card and they separated.

Might the children be living? That was the question Hermann asked himself, and sorrowfully he came to the conclusion that there was no reason to suppose so, so long a time had elapsed since they were believed to have taken passage for England.

Their fate was enshrouded in mystery, and it might be one of those mysteries which time never unveils. But he pledged himself to use every exertion to discover the truth, faint as the clue now seemed to be.

He decided that it would be useless and cruel to apprise the Hartmanns of the fact that Caspar and Minna had not been lost in the "Snow Cloud," since the uncertainty of their fate would only revive their grief. For the same reason he concluded to withhold it from his father and mother for the present, while he employed the interval in making every research possible.

There was a shadow on his brow as he walked home, but it was dispelled the moment his eyes fell on the fascinating face of Claudine Duval. He had persuaded himself that he was deeply in love with her. Perhaps he mistook admiration of her charms for a true and sacred affection.

Claudine had her own troubles, which she had hidden from her lover. That very morning she had found lying on her chamber floor a note wrapped round a pebble which had been flung into her open window. She knew the handwriting too well. Only Bastian could have penned such a note as this:

"You think you have escaped me, because I am in hiding and dare not show myself openly. But I watch you and know every step you take. Remember our last interview. It was no empty threat I uttered, and I give but one warning. My way is not to talk, but to act. You are coquetting with Hermann Steinberg. End this dangerous sport at once. If sport it is dangerous—if serious fatal. Remember the fate of Marcelle."

Brave as she was Claudine's blood curdled in her veins as she read this. Yet she met Hermann as if there was no shadow on her heart.

But she was feverishly impatient for the wedding-day. Once she would defy Casar Bastian. Hermann, happy in the golden hours of courtship, had never once spoken to her about the time of their marriage. Yet he was now in a position to claim her hand, for he had finally obtained his father's consent to abandon the distasteful business of the law, and had been given a share in Steinberg's lucrative business, to which he was hereafter to devote his entire attention.

She now met the young man in the hall dressed most coquettishly, and looking more fascinating than ever.

They talked awhile as lovers do, and full well did the designing woman perceive that she had completely immersed the young German in her toils. She was sure that she had succeeded in oblitterating the image of Flora Falkenstein from his heart.

He was enraptured, fascinated, infatuated.

Suddenly, seizing her hand and drawing her toward him, he said:

"Darling, when will you be mine?"

"Whenever you please," answered Claudine, while a deep blush pleaded forgiveness for her eager consent.

He led her into the parlour where Nicolaus, Linda, and Frederika were just preparing to sit down to lunch.

"Father—mother," said the young man—"you have treated this girl as if she were your daughter. Will you love her as much when she is my wife?"

Linda Steinberg answered by folding Claudine to her heart.

Nicolaus took her hand and his son's, and joined them, and Frederika kissed her.

"I knew your secrets long ago," said the honest jeweller, "though you thought you had hidden them so cunningly. I consent to the match on one condition—that you get married directly."

This was exactly what Claudine desired, though she thought proper to blush at the suggestion. Her beauty had triumphed—her position was secure.

But Hermann Steinberg, in the sense of present happiness, did not forget the mystery that shrouded the fate of Caspar and Minna.

That very evening he wrote a long letter to his Uncle Christian, at Mainz, detailing his interview with the sole survivor of the wreck of the "Snow Cloud."

He begged of him to keep the revelation a profound secret for the present, and, in the meantime, to institute a search in Germany for the missing ones while he was pursuing his investigations in England. He urged Mr. Steinberg to employ the most intelligent detectives, no matter what it cost, and to place in their hands copies of the photographs of Carl Wolff and of Caspar and Minna.

If he learned anything he promised to communicate intelligence instantly, and begged his uncle to do the same in return.

CHAPTER XXIII.

COL. MOWBRAY, the superintendent of police, was closeted in his private office with a plainly dressed man far advanced in life, yet bright-eyed, erect and apparently full of vitality. This man was a French detective, and had visited this country in search of a bank robber.

"Very well, sir," the colonel was saying. "I will do everything in my power to aid you in your search. I have introduced you to all my officers, and they will help you to the extent of their power."

"They may arrest me, perhaps," said the detective, with a singular smile.

"How so?" asked the colonel.

"Why, they will come across me in various disguises, and I am such a comedian that I verily believe I could impose on you yourself. I'm sorry to say that it is easier to impose on officials than on the rogues we hunt. The villains whose lives and liberties are at stake are lynx-eyed. Still, I have managed to deceive the sharpest of them in my day, and I think

age improves my faculties. I believe I am on the track of this Paul Maurice. Him I pursue in the interests of justice. I have no personal motives for hunting him down, for I care nothing for the reward offered."

"That is curious," said Mowbray.

"No; for those for whose sake I once sought to secure a fortune—wife and daughter—are in the grave. But this reward, if I secure it, all the money I have in the world, I would give if I could lay hands on one other fugitive from justice—a villain of the deepest dye—red-handed, black-hearted—a monster in human shape. Once I thought I had my revenge. Once I brought him to bay, and he stood at this bar on trial for his life. The evidence against him, though circumstantial, was strong. I was convinced of his guilt, for I knew of another crime he had committed, though that could never be brought home to him."

The detective covered his face with his hands, and was silent for a few moments. Then he resumed: "How I watched the faces of the jury! How I paced up and down the narrow paved corridor, waiting for the verdict. Already I anticipated the punishment of the criminal. I saw, in imagination, the blood-red frame-work of the guillotine rear its ghastly shape on the *Place de la Roquette*. I saw the felon come out from the prison door, supported by the almoner. I saw his look of horror as his eyes fell on the fatal plank and the fatal knife. I saw the executioner and his assistants bend down his withering form on the balanced plank. I saw the knife flashing down. I saw the blood gushing from the trunk, and heard the malefactor's head thump in the basket. From my dream of vengeance I was roused by the noise of shuffling feet in the court. The jury were returning. I hastened back to my post of observation, and listened for the verdict."

"Guilty, but with extenuating circumstances. Idiots! cowards! There was milk and water in their veins—not good French blood. I cursed them in my soul, for that verdict changed the sentence from death to imprisonment for life at hard labour. I thirsted for that man's blood—though I am no savage, no tiger—for a reason you will know one of these days. Well, sir, after a time I came to be satisfied with the sentence. This felon loved liberty and its pleasures—loved dress, dancing, drink, pretty faces, cards—had been a swell in his day, worn lavender kids, driven fast horses, and ridden steep-chases. Imprisonment was far worse than death to such a man. The sentence came on him with a blow sharper than the knife of the guillotine. When he heard it he gave one cry, and fell to the floor as if he had been shot. I was fully avenged. Judge then of my rage when, a few months afterwards, I learned that he had escaped from *Brast*. I swore to recapture him, but so far I have failed. Once I thought I had him sure, but he baffled me. But I am not altogether without hope that Providence may yet give him into my grasp. I have sworn to have him if it cost me my life. Only let me clutch him, and my task in this world is ended."

After a pause he added, as he rose to leave:

"I thank you, colonel, for having listened to me so patiently, and for your honouring my credentials as you have done. I have completed all the arrangements for holding Paul Maurice if we get him. Promise you will aid me to secure the other."

"Anything I can do within the law I will."

The detective bowed and left the office.

"A strange man!" said Colonel Mowbray to himself, when he had gone. "I should not care to be the object of his pursuit."

And he put away in his pocket-book two photographs which the French detective had given him.

That evening two men were seated at different tables in a small garden in the rear of a low drinking-saloon.

Company came and went, but these two men kept their places. No salutation passed between them but from time to time they eyed each other keenly.

Yet when either was detected in this scrutiny he at once looked away and assumed an air of indifference.

One of these men wore a shabby velvet suit and a slouched hat, looking like a peasant from the Bavarian mountains.

His face and hands were tanned and swarthy, and his long locks, beard and moustache were of a tawny hue.

He was smoking a pipe with a china bowl, and alternately took a whiff and a sip from a huge glass beer-mug.

The other man was far older, and had a shock of iron gray hair and a huge beard, which hid the lower part of his face. He was very shabbily dressed.

The man in the velvet dress was Casar Bastian. Who the other was what follows will show.

When all but these two men had left the garden Casar Bastian took up his half-emptied mug, and,

changing his place, sat down opposite the old man in the light blue overcoat.

"A chilly evening, friend," he said, speaking English, with a strong German accent.

"Yes; but here's something to keep up the steam," replied the blue-coated veteran, tapping a case-bottle of schnapps that stood before him.

He too spoke English with a German accent.

"Will you have some?" he added.

"Thank you, I prefer my beer."

"When you've been as long in this country as I have, or when you've served in the army as I have," said the old man, "you'll turn up your nose at such wisby-washy stuff, and come to strong drinks. I take it from your dress you're a new comer."

"Yes. I only landed six weeks ago," said Casar, unblushingly.

"And where are you from?"

"From the Schwarzwald."

"You've learned English very quick," said the man in blue, eyeing him sharply.

"Bless your soul! I didn't learn English here. I learned it in the Fatherland, so that I could turn the honest penny as a guide to English tourists. I wish I'd remained in Germany. But I caught the emigration fever, all the neighbours were leaving, and so Ernst Brocken must go with the rest."

"So your name is Ernst Brocken?"

"At your service, friend—and yours?"

"Wilhelm Colberg," replied the old man, "as sure as your name is Ernst Brocken. Come, comrade, let's drink to our better acquaintance."

He spoke lightly and it was evident that his strong potations were beginning to tell on him.

"With all my heart," said Bastian, raising his beer-glass.

"Not in that stuff," said the old man. "Pour it away, and fill up with schnapps."

"No, old fellow, none of that for me. I prefer to keep a cool head on my shoulders."

"Some people find it a hard thing to keep their heads on their shoulders," retorted the old man, with such a look and such an emphasis that Casar Bastian thought:

"I am right—he is Jacques Renard, and he suspects me."

"You talk in riddles, friend," he said, with a careless laugh.

"Maybe," muttered the old man, "maybe. But you don't mind what I'm saying to you. Throw that beer away. You won't? Then I'll do it for you."

He emptied the beer on the ground, and half filled the mug with spirits.

"You've spilt my beer," said Bastian, "but you can't make me drink that poison."

"Look here!" said the old man, insolently. "In the army I've picked up some curious notions. I asked you to drink civilly. If you refuse you're no gentleman."

"I never set up for one."

"To cut this matter short," said the old ruffian, "it's come to this—drink or fight."

"I shall do neither," answered Bastian.

"Then you're no man!" cried the other. "You're a sneaking coward. Take that!" and he flung the mug of spirits in Bastian's face.

Instantly both men sprang to their feet, and while the man, with surprising activity, stripped off his coat, Bastian flung off his, and rolling up his shirt-sleeves bared his muscular arms to the elbows.

"Pahaw!" said the old man, suddenly quieting down, and putting on his coat, "you're one of those chaps who can't take a joke. Drink or not—what do I care?"

"Old fellow," said Bastian, "take a fool's advice. Don't drink any more. You're tipsy enough already. Go home if you have a home, or you'll wind up the day in the lock-up. Good-night."

The old man made no reply, but sat leaning his face on his hands with his elbows on the table.

"Baffled!" thought Bastian, as he walked away. "He was almost sure of me till I rolled up my sleeves, and he saw no brand upon my arms. I did well to face him boldly. But I must be wary. I must be doubly cautious now that Jacques Renard is on my track."

It is needless to say that it was Jacques Renard who had called on the superintendent of police that morning.

The detective sat still, plunged in gloomy thought. The landlord came up to him and put his head on his shoulder.

"Bay for your liquor and walk your chalks, mine friend," he said. "I'm going to shut up, and I'll owe no sleeping here."

Jacques Renard, the detective, flung down a coin on the table, rose, and walked away.

He had not touched a drop of the poisonous stuff he had paid for, but had poured it under the table when he was not noticed.

"Vot a head he's got!" cried the landlord.

(To be continued.)



[THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH.]

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH.

THE lives of English members of our Royal Family have not been uniformly of the happiest character. Especially has this been the case in their marital and conjugal relations. Consequently any intermarriage has been regarded as a political combination, rather than an alliance dictated by the purity and the first fervour of affection. We think, however, that in the recent royal arrangement it has been distinctly otherwise. The marriage contract as between the Duke of Edinburgh and the Russian Princess is to be regarded as one completely of pure affection and of domesticated love. Such has not always been the case with the reigning House; in fact the less we say as concerning the Hanoverian branch the better. Unfaithful as Tudors or as Stuarts might on occasions have been, they knew at least how to comport themselves in regal fashion towards the accredited partners of their thrones. It was reserved for an ill-minded George IV. to be unkingly and utterly unkind. His blood, however, ran fairly throughout the august family, and the disclosures about the Duke of York and Miss Clark constitute no peculiarly agreeable addition to the political literature of the period.

Happily the arrangements of our reigning House point to totally another direction, and are worked entirely in another groove. And this obtains more nearly with our popular Sailor Prince, with Prince Alfred, whose picture we now present to our readers, and concerning whom we design to set down a brief biography.

Alfred Ernest Albert, Duke of Edinburgh, the second son of our beloved Queen and of the admirable and excellent Prince Consort, was born at Windsor Castle, August 6, 1844. Like all the members of the Royal House he enjoyed the high advantages of an excellent training. The Prince, his father, was fully alive to all the reflected benefits of the higher culture, and he loved to encourage it in others, and most of all to secure its

results within the beloved compass of his own family. His own fireside ever claimed his foremost regards. His fine intellect, trained amidst the ethos of Bunsen and the kindred souls of modern German erudition, was desirous evidently to use his high station for purposes of public utility, and nowhere more so than in the education of the rising hope of his race. Accordingly, the early education of Prince Alfred was entrusted to the Rev. H. M. Birch—an accomplished classicist and also a liberal thinker. Liberal thought and culture and high feeling are evidently combined in some strict sense; let the bigots assert precisely as they please. Early training is of the highest possible importance. In the winter of 1856 the young Prince passed to Geneva, where he employed his time mostly in the study of modern languages. In these accomplishments the Duke of Edinburgh is altogether a consummate master. Like the Duke of Clarence (William IV.), and obeying the old traditions of his family, the Prince chose the Navy as his nominal profession, for professions have to be discovered even for the sons of live and regal people. He entered the naval service in August, 1858, was subsequently appointed a naval cadet, and joined Her Majesty's screw steam frigate "Euryalus," 51 guns, Captain John Walter Tait, C.B. After a leave of absence of a few weeks Prince Alfred joined his ship for active sea-service, 27th October, 1858, and served in the "St. George" in various foreign stations, visited many of the countries on the shores of the Mediterranean, and has also extended his travels to America and the West Indies. In all his multifarious appearances our well-beloved Sailor Prince, or regal Viking, has approved himself as popular. He possesses the veritable instinct, bred of the nice commixture of what is royal and what belongs authentically to the sea. In Dec., 1862, Prince Alfred declined the proffered throne of the Greeks; when, owing mainly to low Turkish intrigues, the sons of Lysander and of Pericles had to go, as it seemed, begging for a ruler. It was

hard work that the cause fought for by Markos Bozzaris and by Lord Byron should be tossed for by mean Bavarian and mean Danish princes. Such perhaps are the vicissitudes of life, national as well as individual. And so in this connection the son of the Queen of England might well decline any personal complication in Oriental matters, and most of all in those of the Greeks. The kingdom, or rather the empire, once ruled by Justinian and once bled for by Bozzaris, has come to be merely a kind of playball for the innocent royal person, Prince George of Denmark. European politics cannot suffer this long.

To continue our biography. The Prince was created Duke of Edinburgh, Earl of Kent, and Earl of Ulster, in the peerage of the United Kingdom, May 24, 1866, and he took his seat in the House of Lords June 8 of the same year. In the year 1864 he, together with Prince Louis of Hesse, attended the classes of Greek and of English Literature in the University of Edinburgh. An anecdote may here be well and worthily recorded. Professor Aytoun offered the prince a seat near the professorial platform, but, declining the notice sought to be expressly paid to their conspicuous rank, the prince preferred to sit in ordinary style as among their fellow students. As the Scottish graduates are for the most part Radicals and Democrats (unlike their brethren of Eton and of Oxford) this fine conduct of the Prince, even in a matter of comparative trifles, won him high regard and enthusiastic affection. Subsequent to his academic course and the naval series of instruction the Duke has made what may be almost called a tour of the world. Early in 1867 he was appointed to the command of the frigate "Galatea," whence he proceeded to Australia, where he met with the warmest reception. The colonists are ever eager after royalty and the belongings of royalty. The triumphal progress of the Prince was seriously marred by the infamous attempt at assassination endeavoured to be perpetrated by the patriot O'Farrell. That eminent individual, atheist after Popery and Home Rule, thought—in strict obedience to the traditions of his excellent following—to kill one of the leading members of the reigning House. In this attempt he was happily frustrated; indeed, his endeavour served chiefly to evoke the intensity of a loyal, perfunctory enthusiasm.

The Duke of Edinburgh is exceedingly popular in private life. His sympathies and his tastes are those distinctly of an English gentleman. Towards pictures, the opera, and the theatres he is completely well disposed—in fact he is a regal Mécenas in some sort in those several and important directions. His most recent step in life has, we take it, been one of the most popular. The lovely Russian Princess is all his own, and right worthily has he won her. The alliance is a good one, both personally and in a European sense. And the allowance, or grant, is generously given by the wide and manifold heart of the English people. The Sailor Prince is indeed the great predilection of the English people. Whether as Duke of Edinburgh or as Prince, in succession of Saxe Coburg Gotha, he remains ever one of us, and in this connection he will ever be regarded. Long may he and his royal consort prosper among our English historic memories!

If we may venture to touch upon a most delicate topic we must express our distinct conviction as against the financial vote. The position of the Monarchy in England is not free from peril, and it is not wise to expose that august institution to needless attacks. The *Times* itself mentioned half the sum that was subsequently voted. And the Prince, taking into consideration his annuity, already liberally furnished, and his excellent matrimonial alliance, and also his next succession to the throne of Saxe Gotha, must certainly be regarded as a rich man. Naturally our taxpayers do not care to throw away their money as a sort of superfluity. The enemies of our reigning House, and indeed of all order, are not slow to take advantage of the casual extravagance. Still we may perhaps confidently affirm that the object of the golden shower is the most popular that could by possibility have been selected. Since the Duke of Clarence, the Duke of Edinburgh is our Sailor Prince—a position always regarded here in England with high favour. Personally he has won and splendidly retained the best regards of the people. No member of the blood royal is half so familiar to our gaze. And none it may be is nearly so popular. His projected marriage links together in happy combination the free government of the West and the rising power of the East. Dynastic matters alone considered, the alliance must be pronounced admirable. And the Duke is indeed happy or happiest in the near prospect of possessing a Princess radiant in all the charms of loveliness and feminine fascination, and endowed with all the rare belongings of a noble disposition and of potent personal allurements. The royal commander of the "Galatea" lost his heart quite evidently at St. Petersburg. But the great

heart of England beats in unison with his. And throughout the entire kingdom but one hope is felt and one word expressed—that of sympathy and affection and also of congratulation towards our Sailor Prince and his illustrious and most lovely bride.

THE LORD MAYOR'S STATE COACH.

This coach was built in the year 1757. An entry in the *British Chronicle* of Wednesday, the 9th Nov., 1757, states that Sir Charles Asgill, Knt., attended by the aldermen, sheriffs, and other officers of the City, went in the new state coach, drawn by "six fine roan horses, to the Three Cranes, and being attended by several of the companies' barges, went from thence to Westminster, where he was sworn into the high office of Lord Mayor of this City, before the barons of the Exchequer," etc. It would appear probable, therefore, that this was the first occasion of its public use by the Lord Mayor.

In 1777 extensive repairs and adornments were made to the coach by a Mr. Jacob.

On the 27th September, 1778, a report was presented to the Court of Common Council, in which it is stated, "That the present state coach was built in 1757, by subscription of 60*l.* each from the several aldermen then under the chair, and the aldermen then entered into an agreement that every gentleman thereafter elected alderman should on his admission subscribe 60*l.* towards the expense of building the coach, and when elected mayor 100*l.*, which 100*l.* was to be allowed him for ornamenting and beautifying the same."

At the same time the then proprietors of the coach, having relinquished their rights therein to the Corporation, the Common Council directed that measures should be taken for its due preservation, and it has since that time been kept in repair by the General Purposes Committee.

By whom the coach was built or the carvings executed cannot now with any certainty be ascertained. The panels are said by some to have been painted by Cipriani, and the heraldic devices have been attributed to Catton, one of the foundation members of the Royal Academy, who was also coach-painter to King George III. The statement of Smith, in "Nobles and his Times," that after the present royal state coach was built, in 1762, the old one was purchased by the City of London, and the panels repainted by Dance, appears from the entries before given to be without foundation.

The under-carriage, which is richly carved and gilt, has in front a pair of marine figures supporting the seat of the driver, in front of which projects a large scallop shell, forming the footboard.

Above the hind axle-tree is an open gilt framework, to which the braces supporting the coach are attached; the ends of the framework are ornamented with two griffins, and in the centre is the shield of the City arms, supported by figures of Commerce and Plenty.

The perch, which is painted Indian red, and picked out with gold, is double, and terminates in dolphins' heads.

The four wheels, which resemble those of ancient triumphal chariots, are carved and painted red, and partly gilded, having massive gilt bosses covering the wheel boxes.

The body of the coach is not supported by springs, but suspended upon four thick black leather braces, fastened with large gilt brass buckles of spirited design, each bearing the City arms.

The framework of the carriage is also finely carved and gilt throughout.

The roof is painted red and ornamented with eight gilt vases. The centre was formerly occupied by a group of four boys supporting baskets of fruit and flowers, the truncated base of which still remains, and is covered with the City arms, from which ornamental gilt scroll-work trails over the remainder of the roof.

The upper intervals of the body, except at the back, are filled with plate-glass; above each door is a Phrygian cap, with wings, surrounded with scroll-work; and between the upper and lower panels a Roman trophy, of helmet, spears, and flags. At the lower angles of the body are dwarf figures, emblematic of the four quarters of the globe. The smaller enrichments about the panels, as shells and flowers, are also admirably carved and grouped. Over the back panel are a serpent and dove, typical of Wisdom and Innocence.

The lower panels, which are admirably painted, are as follows:

The front panel—Faith, Hope, and Charity; Faith beside a sacrificial altar, supporting Charity, Hope pointing to St. Paul's Cathedral.

Lower back panel—The Genius of the City, seated, Riches and Plenty pouring money and fruits into her lap; a large ship in the background, and bales of merchandise in front.

Upper back panel—The Genius of the City, attended by Neptune, receiving the representatives of Trade and Commerce from all the quarters of the globe; the shaft and capital of the monument in the background.

Right side door—The Genius of the City throned, having in her hands the sword and sceptre; Fame presenting to her a Lord Mayor, over whose shoulder she holds a wreath. On the left of the picture, on a table, are grouped the sword, mace, and cap of Maintenance, the spire of old St. Paul's in the background. In the small panel beneath are the staff of Mercury, and a cornucopia emblematical of Peace and Plenty.

Side panels—The left represents Truth with her mirror, and the right Temperance holding the bridle.

Left side door—The Genius of the City standing with her right hand on the civic shield. Mars, the especial deity of citizens, pointing with his spear to a scroll held by Truth, bearing the inscription, "Henri Fitzalwin, 1189" (the first mayor); the Tower of London, with some shipping in the background. In the small panel beneath is the City state sword and scales of Justice.

Side panels—The left panel depicts Justice with her sword and scales, and the right Fortitude.

In shields at the lower angles of each door, and of the front and back panels, are emblazoned the arms of the Lord Mayor for the time being and those of the City of London.

The coach was entirely regilded in November, 1868, and the paintings carefully cleaned in 1869, when numerous coats of varnish, which previously obscured them, were removed, and the coach was relined, and a new hammer-cloth supplied.

A BOG-TROTTER.—A large bog at Cappamore, Tipperary, is reported to have recently changed its position half a mile. The movement was accompanied by strong vibrations of the ground and loud noises. A bog-trotter, indeed, that could trot off half a mile. We now understand the meaning of the word.

LAND IMPROVEMENTS IN DUNROBIN.—The Duke of Sutherland is this summer conducting a highly useful experiment in the conversion of heather land into pasture. A portion of land, 700 feet above the sea and five acres in extent, has been put at the disposal of Mr. Isaac Brown, of Edinburgh, to be laid down with his apparatus for the distribution of water, as introduced by him into the park at Dunrobin last year. The ground was sown with clover and rye grass on the 20th May, and in July there was a growth of fine herbage from four to six inches in length. It is anticipated that when the ground is put under grazing, some time during this month, it will afford feed for 25 sheep to the acre. The experiment thus promises to have an important bearing on the food question. In the portion of Dunrobin Park laid down in July 30 sheep to the acre are now being grazed and fattened.

A LOBSTER FARM.—A lobster farm has been established within the last year on the coast of Massachusetts. A space of thirty acres of flats in an arm of the sea was enclosed by a dyke, with an arched way in the centre to permit the ebb and flow of the sea, the tide rising three feet inside and eight feet outside. During July and August of 1872 40,000 lobsters, of all ages, sizes, and conditions, were let loose in the pond. Food, consisting of refuse from the fish market, was plentifully supplied to them, and a gate was put up to prevent their escape to the sea. Last winter holes were cut in the ice, and traps were put down. Good hard-shell lobsters were caught, thereby proving that the water was deep enough and pure enough to keep the fish alive, and that the lobsters were healthy, having taken on their hard shells and having recovered their lost claws. This spring about 15,000 male lobsters were taken out and sold, the hen lobsters having been thrown back for breeding purposes. At the present time the spawn is in its last stage, the eggs showing the young fry, and in a few weeks some millions of young lobsters will swarm in the pond. The only obstacle to success is the danger arising from other fish consuming the young lobsters, but it is believed that the gravelly bottom will furnish hiding-places.

FESTIVAL OF THE THREE CHOIRS.—The official programme of the complete arrangements for the 150th anniversary of this time-honoured festival is now in the press. The festival of the three choirs of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester is to be held this year at Hereford, in the week commencing Sept. 8, under the usual royal patronage. No less than eighty-nine stewards have accepted office, with Lord Bateman, the lord lieutenant of Hereford, at their head. The principals engaged are Mdlle. Tietjens, Miss Edith Wynne, and Mdlle. Bartkowska (soprano); Mdlme. Trebelli-Bettini and Miss Enriques (con-

tralto); Mr. W. H. Cummings, Mr. Montem Smith, and Mr. Lloyd (tenors); and Mr. Sautley and Signor Agnesi (bass). Mr. Sautley leads the orchestra, and Mr. Smith (organist of Hereford cathedral) is the conductor, Dr. Wesley (Gloucester) taking the piano-forte, and Mr. Dore (Worcester) the organ. The festival sermon will be preached by the Rev. Archer Clive. The oratorios are Mendelssohn's "Elijah" on Tuesday morning; Handel's "Jephtha" and Rossini's "Stabat Mater" on Wednesday morning; Mendelssohn's "St. Paul" on Wednesday evening; "Hagar," a new oratorio by Sir F. A. Gore Wesley, Mus. Doc., Spohr's "Christian Prayer," and Handel's "Chandos Anthem," on Thursday morning; with the "Messiah" on Friday. Secular concerts will be given on Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings at the Shire Hall, the sacred music being given in the cathedral.

THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF SLEEP.—A writer in a medical journal says:—The human body requires intervals of rest, for replacing the waste caused by the wear and tear of activity. The interval is the period of sleep. During this period the functions of the brain and spinal cord are suspended (but not the sympathetic system), and hence physiologists have supposed that nervous energy was exhausted. But it would be better supported by facts to believe that the nerve force is not exhausted, but simply prevented from exercising its effects on the body, as a time-piece may be stopped by touching the pendulum though the power of the spring is by no means exhausted. It would appear that the cause of sleep does not commence with the nerves, but originates in the muscular system, and hence reacts on the brain. Thus, the blood vessels, in virtue of their muscular fibres, possess the property of tonicity—a property independent of the nervous system. After the exertions of the day the muscular system becomes relaxed, the blood vessels lose their tonicity, become dilated, and the blood in them presses upon the nervous centres contained in their unyielding cases—the cranium and spinal canal. That the tonicity of the vessels is less before sleep than immediately after is shown by the fact that the pulse is less excitable and less frequent in the evening than in the morning.

FUNERAL RITES AND CEREMONIES.

THE ancient Persians disposed of their dead by interment. Some of the royal tombs still existing have often been described. That of Cyrus is unique, being a sepulchral chamber in the shape of a small house, placed upon seven blocks of marble rising pyramid fashion. Most of the tombs were excavations in the sides of mountains, the front of which was adorned with magnificent carving. There was generally room for several bodies within. It is melancholy to think that, as in Egypt, many of these ancient receptacles of the dead have been rifled of their contents, probably by the greed of some of the very numerous invaders of Western Asia. Not that they stand alone in this. Those who have a strong belief in the resurrection of the body will ever regard with abhorrence such sacrilege to the bodies even of the heathen dead, whether it have been committed by Oriental searchers after plunder or by European men of science eager to find subjects for a museum. Of the lower people among the Persians there was said to be a certain class of religionists that would not bury their dead until they had first been torn by some dog or bird of prey. They were afterwards covered with wax and buried in the ground.

The strange custom of exposing the bodies of the dead to the beasts of prey is said to prevail among the modern Parsees, both of Persia and India. There are round towers open to the sky, except for bars of iron placed across at certain distances, on which the bodies are laid. The bones, after the birds have denuded them of their flesh, slip through the bars and fall down within.

Cannibalism is the most revolting practice that has prevailed concerning the disposal of the dead. Many of the ruder barbarians, when a man grew old or sickly, offered in sacrifice and feasted upon him. But if a man died of disease they buried him. This curious mark of affection was customary among the Massagete and other people of Northern Asia, and some of the Indian tribes; nor has it yet died out. The cannibalism of the New Zealand Maories was different. They devoured only the bodies of their enemies whom they had slain in battle; and the notion was that in so doing they condemned them to everlasting punishment in the other world. If the slain were very numerous they flung into the sea those that they could not dispose of in this way.

The practice of interring with the dead implements and vessels containing food has been common among many barbarous nations, of whom the ancient Scythians may be taken as a specimen. When a king died the body was embalmed with frankincense and anise seed, and enclosed in wax. It was then placed on a waggon and conducted through the principal tribes of Scythia, in each of which

ceremonies of mourning took place, including personal mutilation. It was finally deposited upon a mattress in a large square-shaped grave. In the space around the departed were placed the bodies of his favourite concubines, his cup-bearer, groom, and various other attendants, strangled for the occasion; and some of his horses. In one of the royal tombs at Korth examined lately there were discovered a shield, sword, and arrow-heads, vases, silver drinking-cups, wine vessels, and three large cauldrons containing mutton bones. Fragments of clothes were also discovered hanging from the walls. The intention of course was that the departed should take with him into the next world everything that had been specially useful to him in this life. What a strength of belief in the immortality of man is displayed by such customs in many out-of-the-way nations! The perversion of this belief has given rise to human sacrifices over the dead, of which the modern kingdom of Dahomey affords the best-known instances.

LOVERS AND THE MOON.

It was once, and still may be, the custom of Highland women to salute the new moon with a solemn courtesy. English country dames were wont to sit on a stile or gate, waiting the new moon's appearance to welcome her with, "A fine moon, Heaven bless her!" Bachelors were privileged to claim a kiss and a pair of gloves upon announcing the advent of a new moon to the first maiden they met.

If, when first seen, the new moon was upon the right hand of, or directly before, the person making her acquaintance good fortune awaited the lucky individual in the ensuing month; just the contrary result following its appearance on the left hand, or at his or her back.

To see a new moon for the first time through a glass is ominous of ill. To ensure good fortune, one ought, at the sight of her ladyship, to turn over one's money and wish. At the inquest upon victims of the railway accident at Harrow, in November, 1870, a jurymen said his son was in a meadow close by at the time of the collision, and saw the new moon shining brightly, and having a knack of turning over his money when he saw the new moon, he did so, and counted it easily by her light. To render the charm complete the money should be spit upon.

Upon the rising of the new moon the Mandingoes always pray in a whisper, expectorate upon their hands, and then rub their faces with them. The Mussulmans of Turkestan shake off their sins every month by the simple process of jumping up and down seven times with their faces turned toward the new moon. Berkshire lasses used to go out into the fields and cry to the new moon:

"New moon, new moon, I hail thee;
By all the virtue in thy body,
Grant this night that I may see
He who my true love is to be."

In Scotland it was only the first new moon of the new year that was appealed to in this fashion. To obtain success it was necessary to set the back against a tree, and the feet upon a ground-foot stone, and sing or say:

"Oh, new moon, I hail thee
And gift I'm e'er to marry man,
His face turned this way (fast's ye can,
Let me my true love see
This blessed night."

And if the invocator was destined to be married the apparition of her future "guideman" would wait upon her before morning.

THE INCUBATOR FOR HATCHING OSTRICH EGGS.

—A practical application of the "incubator" has lately been made to the hatching of ostrich eggs at the Cape of Good Hope, and with the most satisfactory results. In the establishment at Hilton seventy-five chickens have been already hatched this season—the total number reared there since its inception amounting to 155. Of forty-five eggs placed in the apparatus at one time it is thought that forty-two will produce healthy chickens.

THE PARIS FIGARO, wishing probably to astonish the Parisians, welcomed the arrival of the Shah in Paris by a letter in the Persian language, which was duly printed in its columns in Persian characters and with a French translation appended. The idea was not a bad one, but unfortunately it was discovered, too late, that the letter in Persian, though well enough as a composition, was printed upside down. The effect of so ludicrous a mistake may be imagined—Figaro was furious and all Paris delighted.

THE DIAMOND.—An experiment, recently recorded by Mr. Spence, of Manchester, seems to show that under certain conditions the diamond is combustible at a much lower temperature than is usually supposed. A South African "off-coloured" stone, about the size of a small pea, was imbedded in fire-clay,

mixed with carbonate of soda and hydrate of lime. The crucible containing this mixture was heated in a muffle for three days and three nights, and, though the temperature during this time never rose above a low cherry-red heat, it was found, on breaking open the mass, that the included diamond had entirely disappeared.

A FEARFUL FALL.—A sad accident took place recently at Sheild. Three young men went across from Lerwick to the adjoining Island of Bressay to enjoy themselves, the day being a holiday. After rambling along the sea shore around the island they went on to the headland of Noss, and ascended to the top of a cliff which is 550 feet high. At this season of the year the sea fowl are breeding on the cliff, in large numbers, and one of the party, David Affleck, twenty-two years old, had gone to roll a stone over the top in order to raise the birds, when he overbalanced himself and fell down the giddy height; his companions from the spot where they were could render no assistance, but descended to the bottom as speedily as possible. A boat was brought round. Nothing, however, was to be found, except a few loose turns of grass on the rocks that had been dislodged as the young man descended. He had fallen precipitately into the sea, and his body at the time the mail left had not been recovered.

THE CITY STATUE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT.—During the past few days workmen have been busily engaged in fixing this statue upon its pedestal in Holborn Circus. It cost 2,000*l.* was presented to the Corporation by Mr. Charles Oppenheim, and was accepted by the Court of Common Council, after some discussion as to the propriety of receiving a gift of this kind from a private citizen. The Prince is represented seated on horseback, and hat in hand, as in the act of returning a salute. The bronze is ten feet in height. The pedestal, which was provided by the Corporation, consists of a rustic base of gray granite, surmounted by a moulded and polished block of red granite, from the Ross-shire quarries. At either end of it is a bronze statuette—the one representing "Peace" and the other "History;" but neither very intelligible without the inscription. Bas-reliefs will be inserted on the sides of the pedestal. In one of them Prince Albert will be shown laying a foundation-stone, while on the other Britannia will appear distributing gifts to successful competitors in the peaceful arts. The sculpture has been executed by Mr. Bacon, and the masonry by Messrs. Hill, Keddell, and Waldram, at a total cost of 4,000*l.*

THE LEGENDS OF PLANTS.

SOME plants are emblematical on account of certain events or customs; of these are the national emblems. The rose of England became especially famous during the wars of the Roses, after which the red and white were united, and the rose of both colours is called the York and Lancaster; but when these flowers first became badges of the two houses we cannot discover. The thistle is honoured as the emblem of Scotland, from the circumstance that once upon a time a party of Danes having approached the Scottish camp unperceived, by night, were on the point of attacking it, when one of the soldiers trod on a thistle, which caused him to cry out, and so aroused the enemy. The shamrock of Ireland was held by St. Patrick to teach the doctrine of the Trinity, and chosen in remembrance of him; it is always worn by the Irish on St. Patrick's Day. The heath, in Wales, as a national device, has not been satisfactorily explained, otherwise than as the result of its having the old Cymric colours, green and white. In France the fleur-de-lis is so called as a corruption of Fleur-de-Louis, and has no connection with the lily, but was an iris, chosen as an emblem by Louis VII. when he went to the Crusades, and afterwards named after him. The olive is deemed an emblem of peace, probably because, on account of its durability of growth, it was planted both in Greece and Italy to mark the limits of landed possessions.

Very many plants owe their celebrity to the healing properties with which they are probably endowed, as their common names indicate. Of these are self-heal, woundwort, liverwort, lungwort, eyebright, loose-strife, flea-bane, salvia, from salvo (Lat.) to heal; potentilla, from potential, etc. But in many instances these properties used to be exaggerated and distorted in such a manner that the application of certain plants in wounds and illness, merely as a charm, superseded their being used in a way that might be beneficial; and the witches' cauldrons (like those mentioned in "Macbeth," and the old British cauldron of Ceridwen), which contained decoctions of all kinds of plants, mystically prepared, were looked to as all-powerful remedies when applied with strange rites and incantations.

Some plants have been famous on account of their poisonous qualities, which in various cases have made them historical. The hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) was formerly used in Greece as a state

poison, for it was the custom to put prisoners to death by its means; and it is believed that Socrates, Theramenes, and Phocion were all condemned to drink it. The darnel (*Lolium temulentum*) is a large grass, flowering in July, which grows among barley and wheat, possessed of poisonous properties; it is supposed to be the tares referred to in the parable. The monkhood (*Aconitum napellus*) is a very poisonous plant, even the odour of its leaves and blossoms having an injurious effect on some people; its old name of wolfsbane was given to the plant because hunters dipped their arrows in its juice to make them more deadly. The upas-tree of Java has a great notoriety for the terrible effect it is supposed to have in causing the death of any one who lies down under its shelter, and its milky gum is also used by the natives for their arrows.

FAOETIA.

RATHER PERPLEXING COMMAND.

Captain O'Shea: "Gentlemen, parade to-morrow at four. The first man who arrives last shall be fined."—*Fun.*

"THE PASSIONATE PIGEON."

Enthusiastic Pedestrian: "Am I on the right road for Stratford—Shakespeare's town, you know, my man. You've often heard of Shakespeare?"

Rustic: "Ees. He you he?"—*Punch.*

PERSON PIE.

Tom: "I say, grandma, do you think this poor pigeon was dead when cook put him in the oven?"

Grandma: "Yes, dear. Why?"

Tom (incredulously): "Because he's knocked off all his toes in kicking through the crust, that's all!"—*Fun.*

A SLIGHT OBSTACLE.—A nicely dressed gentleman applied for a marriage licence last week, but when he mentioned the lady's name the police country clerk suggested that if it was all the same to him he would prefer that he should name some other party, as the one mentioned had become his wife the previous day.

WHOSE FAULT.

Wife (reproachfully): "Oh, Charles!" (she had returned to the dining-room, wondering why he had not come upstairs to tea.)

Charles (who had evidently taken a little too much wine): "V'y well, my dear! 'Sh not my fault! 'Sh your fault! 'Cockit fault! Bieque soup was salt! 'Sh'preme d'la v'laille was smoked! And orange fritters 'tough as leather! What did Capt'n du Cane say? Bad cookery cause of all sorts o' crimes. 'Shamed of yourself!"—*Punch.*

"COMING EVENTS CAST THEIR SHADOWS BEFORE."

A servant girl of no strong intellect, who lived with a lady, one day surprised her mistress by giving up her place.

The lady inquired the cause, and found it was that fertile source of dissension between mistress and maid servant—a lad.

"And who is that lad?" inquired the mistress.

"Oh, he's a nice lad; a lad that sits in the kirk just forment me."

"And when does he intend that you and he shall be married?"

"I dinna ken."

"Are you sure he intends to marry you?"

"I daresay he does, meum."

"Have you had much of each other's company yet?"

"Not yet."

"When did you last converse with him?"

"Deed, we hae nae conversed any yet."

"Then how should you suppose that he is going to marry you?"

"Oh," replied the simple girl, "he's been laeg lookin' at me, and I think he'll soon be speakin'."

A GLUT OF DIAMONDS.—The increased price of coal coincides with a reduction of the cost of a purer form of carbon. Whilst black diamonds are quoted at high figure the rates commanded by diamonds proper are very low. Amongst commercial intelligences it is announced that "the market for diamonds continues in a very depressed state, owing to the abundance of the supply." Some of our wealthier readers, heretofore wont, at this time of the year, to be apprized by their coal-merchants of their usually reduced prices for the season, may have received, instead of that accustomed notice, a circular from their jewellers, recommending them, on the assumption that they most likely have, or are in the way to have, wives, daughters, or other female relations, to seize the present favourable opportunity of laying in a stock of diamonds. The wisdom of taking this provident forethought will be manifest from the statement that, "with the exception of stones of very large size, and brilliant and small rose diamonds of the very finest quality, the fall in value has been

general, and in some descriptions, such as rose-cut diamonds of mediocre to middling quality, equal to from 80 to 40 per cent." Should the supply of diamonds go on increasing in excess of the demand it may be that they will sink to a point of depreciation which will give cause for regret that the diamond, although combustible, is not sufficiently so as to allow diaphanous diamonds to be substituted for sable, and burnt instead of coals. Otherwise this is the result which might ultimately ensue from a progressive augmentation of the output of diamonds. —*Punch*.

WHAT LONDON CRUSHERS ARE COMING TO.
"By-the-by, Lady Crowder, have you met the Partingtons lately?"
"Not for an age! They were at my ball last night, but I didn't see them. By the way, did you happen to be there, Captain Smythe?"
"Oh, yes, enjoyed myself immensely!"
"So glad!" —*Punch*.

BEAR AND FOREBAR.

A weekly paper states that:
A meeting of the journeymen bakers of London was held in the Two Brewers Tavern, Soho, on Saturday evening. The object of the meeting was to form a trade protection union. Several persons spoke in favour of the movement, and it was decided to establish such a union.
Well, but even if they wish to save their bakin', what on earth do they want with browin'? —*Fun*.

GREAT AUTUMN MANOEUVRE.

Hodge: "Lor-a-measy, me-aster! Be of to be a 'power in t' ste-ate'? What be of to get by tha-at?"
Mr. G.: "That, my good friend, is a mere detail. The question is, what am I to get by it?"
"In the Debate as to giving a vote to the Agricultural Labourer Mr. Forster read a letter from the Premier, who declared that such extension of franchise was just and politic, and could not long be avoided. The question was thus taken up by Government, which much needs a 'good cry.' —*Punch*.

BLUFFING A PEDLAR.

If there is really a difficult point to be managed, and acuteness is required to effect it, commend us to a woman's wit for the purpose.
Now there was a certain tinware pedlar travelling the country to dispose of notions to such as were willing to bargain. He was a persevering trader, and never would be bluffed off with a short answer. From one house in particular he received continued rebuffs and assurances that nothing was wanted—they never bought anything in that way. Nevertheless, he made his calls steadily with each regular round, till he became a regular pest, and in reply to the information that it was useless to call made known his purpose to do so just as often as he pleased.

One bitterly cold day the bell rang, and the good lady hastened to get her hands from the dough in which they were busy, to answer the call; when she reached the door there stood the everlasting pedlar.

"Any tinware to-day, ma'am?"
"Have you any tin kettles?"
"Yes, ma'am," and away he goes to bring the samples, chuckling at the idea that his zeal was so successful at last.
"There's nothing," muttered he, "like hanging on, any how."
The things were brought, and tin pans were next inquired for. The pans were brought, and other articles enumerated, to seven different kinds, till a goodly portion of the pedlar's load had been transferred to the house.

"Is there anything else you want, ma'am?"
"Oh, no—I don't want any of these; I only asked you if you had them."

The pedlar was fairly "sold," and for a moment felt like getting angry, but the idea rather tickled him, and he commenced retreating his wares to the cart, without uttering a word. He has never called at that house since.

AN INTELLIGENT JUROR.

Questions alternately by the Court, the prosecution, and the defence, as usually answered by an "intelligent juror":
"Are you opposed to capital punishment?"
"Oh, yes—yes, sir."
"If you were on a jury, then, where a man was being tried for his life, you wouldn't agree to a verdict to hang him?"
"Yes, sir—yes, I would."
"Have you formed or expressed an opinion as to the guilt or innocence of the accused?"
"Yes, sir!"
"Your mind, then, is made up?"
"Oh, no—no, it ain't!"
"Have you any bias for or against the prisoner?"
"Yes, I think I have."
"Are you prejudiced?"

"Oh, no, not a bit."
"Have you ever heard of this case?"
"I think I have."
"Would you decide, if on the jury, according to the evidence or mere rumour?"
"Mere rumour."
"Perhaps you don't understand; would you decide according to evidence?"
"Evidence."
"If it was in your power to do so, would you change the law of capital punishment or let it stand?"
"Let it stand."
The court:
"Would you let it stand or change it?"
"Change it."
"Now, which would you do?"
"Don't know, sir."
"Are you a freeholder?"
"Yes, sir, oh, yes."
"Do you own a house or land or rent?"
"Neither—I'm a lodger."
"Have you formed an opinion?"
"No, sir."
"Have you expressed an opinion?"
"Think I have."
The court:
"Gentlemen; I think the juror is competent. It is very evident he has never formed or expressed an opinion on any subject."

THE PLAINT OF THYRA.

Out of my lattice I looked to-day—
Blew the wind and beat the rain;
Down the hill-slopes long and gray,
And the misty vales between,
Glimmering in a haze of green,
Trailed the sodden robes of May;
To my listless heart I say:
Well-a-day! Ah, well-a-day;
Sunshine cannot last for aye;
Once, when th' unclouded springs
In a burst of triumph came
With leafy murmurs and glancing wings,
And life was an idyl sweet and fine,
Set to a music half divine,
What time my heart leaped up like flame,
Thrilled by the magic of one dear name,
The zest of all green growing things,
The rapture of a hundred springs,
Beat in my happy pulses, stirred
By fleeting glance and whispered word,
Thro' my lattice I looked and said:
"Spring shall vanish, and youth decay,
But be the woodlands green or red—
Be the mornings gold or gray—
Sweet, my soul, cry holiday!
Love shall bide with us always!"
Out of my lattice I looked to-day—
Sighed the wind, and sobbed the rain;
Stealthily slips the year away—
Youth and hope are growing gray,
And the lees of love are pain!
Tho' the spring-time dawns again,
And the blithe delights of May
Mooch my roses, on the wane,
Only care and sorrow stay!
And my sad heart makes reply,
Answering with a weary sigh:
"So the wine of love we drain;
Let the changeable year go by—
For well-a-day—oh! well-a-day,
Love nor spring-time lasts for aye!"

S. C. H.

GEMS.

GOLD is the fool's curtain, which hides all his defects from the world.

THERE is no fault in poverty, but the mind that thinks so is faulty.

THE highest luxury of which the human mind is sensible is to call smiles upon the face of misery.

JOR has its limits—we but borrow one hour of mirth from months of sorrow.

THE realities of life—real estate, real money, and a real good dinner; none of which can be realized without real hard work.

A WISE man will never rust out. As long as he can move and breathe he will be doing for himself, his neighbour, or for posterity.

BREAD which has been purchased with unearned money has never the flavour and sweetness of that which is won by the sweat of one's own brow.

LAST year nearly 600,000 newspapers, posted for abroad, had to be stopped in their progress owing to insufficient payment of postage. The neglect of another rule, viz. that fixing eight days from the

date of publication as the limit within which a newspaper must be posted for foreign transmission, also leads to the loss of a large number of newspapers, such number last year having been more than 100,000.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

PREVENTION OF ROTTING IN FINE FRUIT.—It very often happens that fine fruit, especially pears and apples, is attacked by birds and insects so as to make a wound, which, if left to itself, will cause the fruit to rot. It has been found that by cleaning out the place affected, and removing all the dirt and disorganized and bruised matter, and filling up the cavity with plaster of Paris, farther decay may be arrested, and the fruit become fully ripe. A little space may be worked out from under the edges of the skin, so that when the plaster is pressed inward it will keep its place. The exclusion of the air, consequent upon this application, is all that is necessary to prevent the progress of decay. This would, of course, be inexpedient in many cases, but when large and valuable apples and pears are involved the trouble will be but trifling in comparison with the result accomplished.

STATISTICS.

INSANITY IN ENGLAND AND WALES.—The twenty-seventh annual report of the Commissioners in Lunacy, just issued, shows that the total number of lunatics, idiots, and persons of unsound mind in England and Wales registered on January 1 last was 60,296, being an increase of 1,856 upon that of January 1, 1872. These numbers do not include 188 lunatics so found by inquiry residing in charge of their committees elsewhere than in asylums, hospitals, and licensed houses. The total of 60,296 registered on January 1 last consists of 7,923 private patients and 53,273 paupers—the increase during the year having been among the former 331, and among the latter 1,275; total 1,656. The increase of the year 1871 upon that of 1870 was 1,885, represented by 183 additional private patients and 1,697 paupers.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE last purchase made by the Shah was 2,000 whistles for the use of his army.

MR. FITZJAMES STEPHENS, Q.C., is to succeed Sir George Jessel as Solicitor-General.

THE Argyll family boasts now of another female sculptor, in the person of H.R.H. the Marchioness of Lorne.

THE son of the Post Laureate is to be made a baronet, Mr. Tennyson himself having refused all titular distinction from the Crown.

BEFORE leaving Italy the Shah of Persia presented his portrait set in diamonds, to the King and the Royal Princes.

MR. WOOLNER has just completed the model of his statue of Lord Lawrence, which will shortly be cast in bronze and subsequently set up in Calcutta. The figure is ten feet high, in plain frock coat, with the robe of the Star of India thrown over the left shoulder.

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO SCOTLAND.—Her Majesty the Queen is expected to arrive at Balmoral Castle in about five weeks hence. We understand that after residing there about the usual period Her Majesty will proceed across country to Inverlochy Castle, Lord Abinger's seat, near Fort William, where she will reside for eight or ten days. It is expected that while there she will follow the example of the Empress Eugénie and ascend Ben Nevis and picnic near the summit. Arrangements are already being made for her reception, and we understand that Colonel Macpherson, of Cluny, has had an interview with Her Majesty to arrange for the journey. Her Majesty will therefore embark on board a yacht at Fort William, and proceed to Inverary on a visit to the Duke and Duchess of Argyll.

A CURIOUS TEST OF HONESTY.—There is a story told of a French gentleman who, having lost the bulk of his property through the rascality of his friends in whom he trusted, crowned it all by the loss of his mental balance, and for the remainder of his days found his only delight in riding in omnibuses and passing fares from passengers to the conductor, taking care when the change was returned to add to it a son or two from his own pocket and watch the effect on the receiver. In nine cases out of ten, as the story goes, the passenger, counting over his change, would look bewildered for a moment, and then pocket the change with a quiet chuckle. The special delight of the lunatic was satisfying himself in this way that nine-tenths of his fellow-men were dishonest if they only had the opportunity.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
SHIFTING SANDS... 385	LOVERS AND THE MOON... 406
CASH THIRTY-TWO... 388	A FEARFUL FALL... 406
SCIENCE... 388	THE CITY STATUS OF THE PRINCE CONSORT... 406
EFFECT OF SUBMERGENCE ON FLOUR... 388	THE LEGENDS OF PLANTS... 406
PEAT AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR COAL... 388	GEMS... 407
THE HEIRESS OF CLANRONALD... 389	HOUSEHOLD TREASURES... 407
EDITH LYLL'S SECRET... 392	STATISTICS... 407
STUFFING-STONES... 394	MISCELLANEOUS... No.
FICKLE FORTUNE... 397	
MARRIED IN MARK... 399	
THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT... 401	FICKLE FORTUNE, commenced in... 514
THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH... 404	MARRIED IN MARK, commenced in... 519
THE LORD MAYOR'S STATE COACH... 405	THE JEWELLER OF FRANKFORT, commenced in... 530
A LOBSTER FARM... 405	EDITH LYLL'S SECRET, commenced in... 531
FUNERAL RITES AND CEREMONIES... 405	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ANDREW.—The "e" in the word Helena is short. There is a common mistake in this matter.

INQUIRER.—1. September 9, 1851, the Queen visited Liverpool. 2. Prince Albert died 14th December, 1861, at Windsor.

EUGENIE.—A decoction of the ordinary camomile flowers would be of material service. Take a wineglassful on rising in the morning.

A CONSTANT READER.—The writing is susceptible of material improvement. Time, patience, and perseverance will satisfactorily bring that in due course.

INQUIRER.—The battle of Quatre-Bras took place in 1815, immediately before Waterloo, wherein the combination of Saxon valour (English and German and Dutch) effectually put down the Corsican despot.

AGNES.—There are circumstances under which sea-bathing is most unwise and most dangerous, and heart disease, or a tendency to it, is one of them. We should strongly recommend you therefore to remain content with the bracing sea-air, which alone is highly beneficial, and to let the bathing alone.

X. X. X.—The Prince of Wales was baptized at Windsor, January 25, 1842. The ceremony was performed amidst much splendour by the Archbishop of Canterbury with water brought from the river Jordan in 1825. The King of Prussia—the present Emperor of Germany—acted as sponsor on the occasion.

WARRIOR.—Baron Cambronne, a French general of distinction in the campaigns of the Republic and the Empire, died January 8, 1842. The words: "La garde meurt et ne se rend pas" (the Guard dies but never surrenders) are attributed to him. Victor Hugo, however, gives a very different account of his truly laconic reply.

S. S.—In Jenner's Life, written by his son, it is recorded that the theoretic practitioner vaccinated one of his sons with lymph taken from swine. Medical theories are usually postulated as infallible, and great evil has been the result. In the last century bleeding was the panacea for all human ills, and it was by bleeding probably that our own glorious Byron was sent aloft—Missolonghi in 1829.

T. R.—It is necessary that parties about to be married should reside for the time specified by law in the parish in which the banns are proclaimed. The registrar's district sometimes includes more than one parish, but there is usually a registration office within easy reach of the parish church. The registration has no connection with the proclamation of banns, the term of residence or the validity of the marriage.

E. E.—You will find a fine and eloquent account of the murder of Marie Antoinette, and a detailed account of the matter in Thiers's work on the French Revolution. The philosophic gentlemen of Paris thought it perfectly right and fitting to intrude their hands in the blood of beauty. A fine passage on the same subject occurs also in Cassel's volume of Miscellaneous Essays—the one we mean on Cagliostro and the affair of the Diamond Necklace.

DECEIVED.—Deception is bad enough, and most especially bad in tender matters. Yet so it has ever been; to deceive and to be deceived, if we may venture to accommodate a passage in Tacitus. The lines are good in sentiment, and, with a little careful revision, they might serve to fill a column. But neither "gods, men, nor columns" can endure that me should rhyme with me. It is inadmissible. The sorrowful moans of lovers pining in neglected affection are sad to think upon.

SAILOR'S EXPERIENCE.—The sentiment is quite creditable, but the mechanical versification is seriously deficient. If your versifying capability kept pace with your philanthropy you would in time produce something really good. None (which according to Dean Liddell means, in the Etruscan tongue, strength) was not built in a day. Still our best poets, and be just a trifle more careful concerning the executive part of poetic composition.

G. S.—1. Concerning your desire in regard to Agnes and Hester we regret to state that we can in no case insert a formal advertisement such as you ask for. It is altogether against our rule. If we did it in one instance we might do it in all, and we should be literally flooded or washed out with like requests. Why not advertise in one of the morning papers? 2. Handwriting perfectly legible, but capable of material improvement. The letters are formed rather imperfectly, and not gracefully, and there are too many curves and extraneous flourishes. Still, in so far as our recollection serves, we believe there is some evident improvement. 3. Concerning Leander. "It was the custom," writes John Cam Hobhouse, "for those who would cross from Abydos to Sestos to in-

line a mile out of the direct line, and those making the contrary voyage were obliged to have recourse to a similar plan to take advantage of the current; Leander therefore had a perilous adventure to perform, who swam at least four miles to meet Hero, and returned the same distance the same night; it is very possible to swim across the Hellespont without being the rival or having the motive of Leander; Lord Byron, my fellow traveller, was determined to attempt it. Hero was a beautiful priestess of Venus at Sestos, greatly enamoured of Leander, a youth of Abydos. Leander in the night escaped from the vigilance of his family and swam across the Hellespont while Hero in Sestos directed his course by holding a burning torch on the top of a high tower. After many interviews of mutual and delicious tenderness he was drowned in a tempestuous night as he attempted his usual course, and she in despair threw herself from her tower and perished in the sea. The legend occurs in Musaeus, and in the Heroides of Ovid. Compare Byron—Bride of Abydos—

"The winds are high on Helle's wave,
As on that night of stormy weather
When Love who sent forgot to save
The young, the beautiful, the brave—
The only hope of Sestos' daughter!"

THE HAUNTED HUSBAND.

There are how many such in the nation?
We women would like to know;
And the sizes and sorts of the diverse
ghosts

That trouble our poor lords so?

A wise little sprite at my elbow,

Who keeps the affairs of men

Has made out a list for our benefit;

He'll read it, and ah!—what then?

"That man who so starts and trembles,

With face of an ashy hue,

Must (?) have his pipe or his prime cigar,

Though he parts with his shillings

few;

A ghost for ever is clutching him

With fingers that clutch and choke,

Till his throat is dry, and his blood is

poor,

Till life seems dull, and a near grave

Ah, would it might end in smoke!"

"That form that is reeling homeward,

'Neath the light of Heaven's bright

stars,

Has a spectre lying in wait for him

Till the morn' her gate unbars;

The home that was once so cheerful,

Now going to swift decay;

And the tears of his wife and little ones

Will haunt him many a day.

"You wretch who is bold in sinning,

And lures for the sake of gain,

Wreathing with flowers the poison cup,

That the young and the weak may

drain;

When alone he sees in fancy

Weird shapes—not one or two,

But marshalled hosts of frightful ghosts,

That through life his soul pursue.

"The miser that hoards his treasure,

The rich that grind the poor,

The hypocrite with his city tongue,

That mocks the good and pure—

All men who live for evil,

All men who shame the beast

Have a loud attendant 'double,'

Have 'a skeleton at the feast.' M. A. K.

SPRING HEKLED JACK, seventeen, would like to correspond with a young lady about seventeen, with blue eyes, dark hair, of a loving disposition, and domesticated.

BOWER ANCHOR, eighteen, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady about the same age, who must be ladylike and educated.

ANON S. S., nineteen, tall, good looking, and fair complexion, wishes to correspond with a young lady tall, dark, affectionate, and of musical tastes.

JOLLY JOHNNY, twenty-four, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, and fond of home, desires to become acquainted with a young lady, dark, loving, and domesticated.

KITTY T., twenty-seven, fair, pretty, and domesticated, wishes to correspond with a young gentleman about her own age; a grocer preferred.

R. J. F., a seaman in H. M. Navy, twenty-four, dark, loving, and fond of home. Respondent must be about twenty-four, medium height, pretty, and domesticated.

NELLY, twenty, fair, of a loving disposition, and a domestic servant, would like to correspond with a steady young man.

EMILIA, twenty-eight, a domestic servant, of dark complexion, pretty, and possesses money. Respondent must be about her own age.

AUGUSTA ALICE, seventeen, tall, plump, blue eyes, golden brown hair, and fair complexion, desires to correspond with a young tradesman about twenty-five, good looking, and in a comfortable position.

KATHERINE MARY, eighteen, tall, slender, blue eyes, light-brown hair, and fair complexion. Respondent must be about twenty-five, a tradesman, and in a comfortable position.

LEDGER, a clerk in a merchant's counting-house in Liverpool, a widower without incumbrance, and well educated, would like to correspond with a lady about thirty-five, who must be loving, and domesticated.

OSWALD, 5ft. 11in., twenty-three, dark hair, moustache and eyes, considered good looking, and has been four years in India with a cavalry regiment. Respondent must be fond of dancing, and thoroughly domesticated.

JEMMY, twenty, medium height, brown hair, hazel eyes, and considered good looking. Respondent must be fair, good tempered, and affectionate; a mechanic preferred.

OCEAN SWELL, a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-three, 5ft. 10in., dark-blue eyes, black hair, and dark complexion, desires to correspond with a young lady

about nineteen, fond of dancing and singing, loving, and domesticated.

B. D. W., seventeen, fair, good looking, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, and must have a little money; a grocer's assistant preferred.

J. W. H., a seaman in the Royal Navy, twenty-two, 5ft. 6in., dark-brown hair, and blue eyes. Respondent must be about twenty, good looking, of a loving disposition, and domesticated; a chamber-maid preferred.

JACK DOLPHIN STRIKER, a seaman in the Royal Navy, desires to correspond with a young lady about twenty, who must be pretty, and fond of music; a servant preferred.

ANGELA E., eighteen, medium height, fair complexion, of an amiable disposition, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be rather tall, dark, good looking, loving, and fond of home.

MINNIE E., nineteen, medium height, fair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be about twenty-one, tall, fair complexion, light hair, of an amiable temper, and fond of home.

JOSHUA, twenty-three, considered handsome, tall, fair, having good prospects. Respondent must be pretty, of a loving disposition, domesticated, and a tradesman's daughter.

LOVELY HARRY, twenty-four, fair complexion, dark-brown hair, gray eyes, of a loving disposition, and a mechanic. Respondent must be tall, about twenty-two, loving, and domesticated.

CLAUDE D., twenty, 5ft. 5in., a mechanic, dark complexion, curly hair, and of musical tastes, desires to correspond with a young lady about nineteen, pretty, loving, domesticated, and musical.

WILLIAM E., twenty-three, 5ft. 5in., fair complexion, light-brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and fond of home, and a mechanic. Respondent must be nineteen, tall, and affectionate.

LYDIA, seventeen, fair, medium height, a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be about twenty, good looking, dark, and fond of home and children.

NICHOLAS E., twenty-one, light hair and eyes, affectionate, possessing a good income, and fond of children. Respondent must be pretty, domesticated and good tempered.

CARRIE, nineteen, 5ft. 3in., dark-brown hair and eyes, rather dark complexion, desired to correspond with a young man, with dark, curly hair, dark complexion, good looking, and must occupy a good position.

FRANK W., twenty-seven, rather tall, brown hair, dark-blue eyes, of a cheerful and loving disposition. Respondent must be fair, affectionate, domesticated, and fond of music.

MILLY B., eighteen, fair complexion, blue eyes, of a loving disposition, and domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, affectionate, and fond of home; a tradesman preferred.

CLARA N., seventeen, tall, blue eyes, brown hair, and considered pretty. Respondent must be of medium height, light hair, fond of music and dancing, loving, and in a good position.

JULIA, twenty-one, medium height, dark hair and eyes, considered rather good looking, is loving, and thoroughly domesticated. Respondent must be tall, dark, good looking, loving, and fond of home; a postman preferred.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

LOVELY NELLIE is responded to by—"George B." eighteen, tall, rather dark, good looking, fond of home and children, also holding a good position, and having a good income.

LEONORA by—"C. E. St. G." twenty, tall, dark, and thinks he is all that she requires.

MAUD by—"F. F." twenty-two, tall, fair, good looking, and affectionate.

THOMAS by—"Jessie," who thinks she is all that he requires.

FRANK by—"Ada," 5ft. 5in., a nursemaid, pretty, fair, loving and domesticated.

LOUIS by—"Annie," twenty, affectionate and domesticated.

KATLIE THE REEFER by—"Maud B.," twenty, a cook, Auburn hair, and considered good looking.

ROSEBUD by—"Gautier," who is good looking, well connected, and possesses a moderate income.

ROSE J. by—"G. W. M.," twenty-one, and thinks he is all that she requires.

HARRIET B. by—"J. A. L.," twenty, and thinks that he is all she seeks.

AUDACIOUS GEORGE by—"Myra," twenty-one, tall, fair, considered good looking, of a loving disposition and thoroughly domesticated.

BOLICKING ARTHUR by—"Nellie," who is thoroughly accomplished, considered pretty, and possesses a little money.

ALL THE BACK NUMBERS, PARTS AND VOLUMES of the "LONDON READER" are in print and may be had at the Office, 334, Strand; or will be sent to any part of the United Kingdom Postfree for Three-halfpence, Eightpence, and Five Shillings and Eightpence each.

EVERYBODY'S JOURNAL, Parts 1 to 4, Price Threepence each.

THE LONDON READER, Post-free Three-halfpence Weekly; or Quarterly One Shilling and Eightpence.

Now Ready VOL. XX. of THE LONDON READER. Price 4s. 6d.

Also, the TITLE and INDEX to VOL. XX. Price One Penny.

NOTICE.—Part 123, for AUGUST, Now Ready, price 6d.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Published for the Proprietor, at 334, Strand, by G. A. SMITH.